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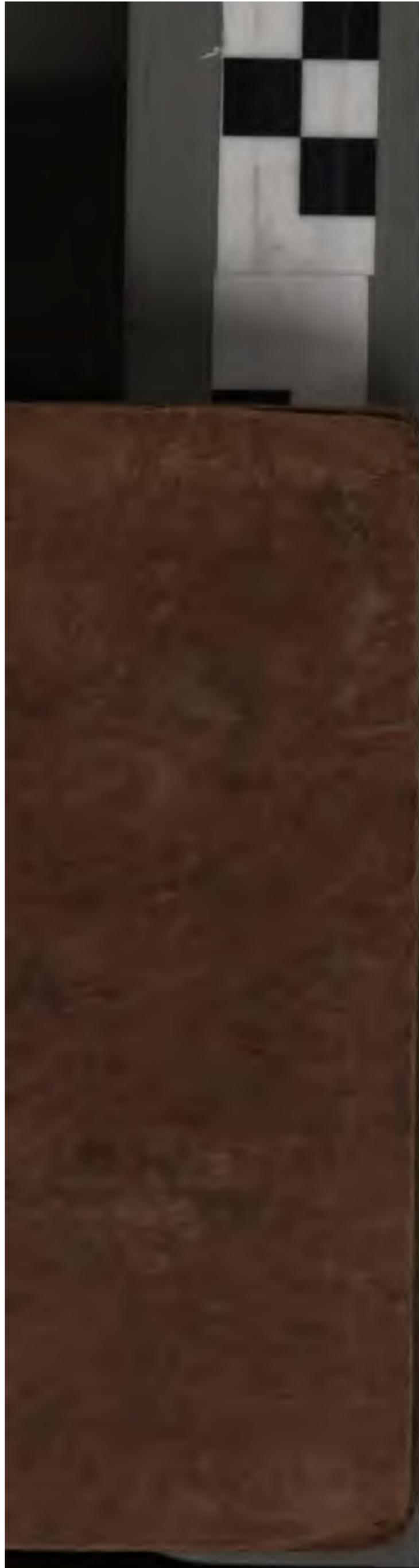
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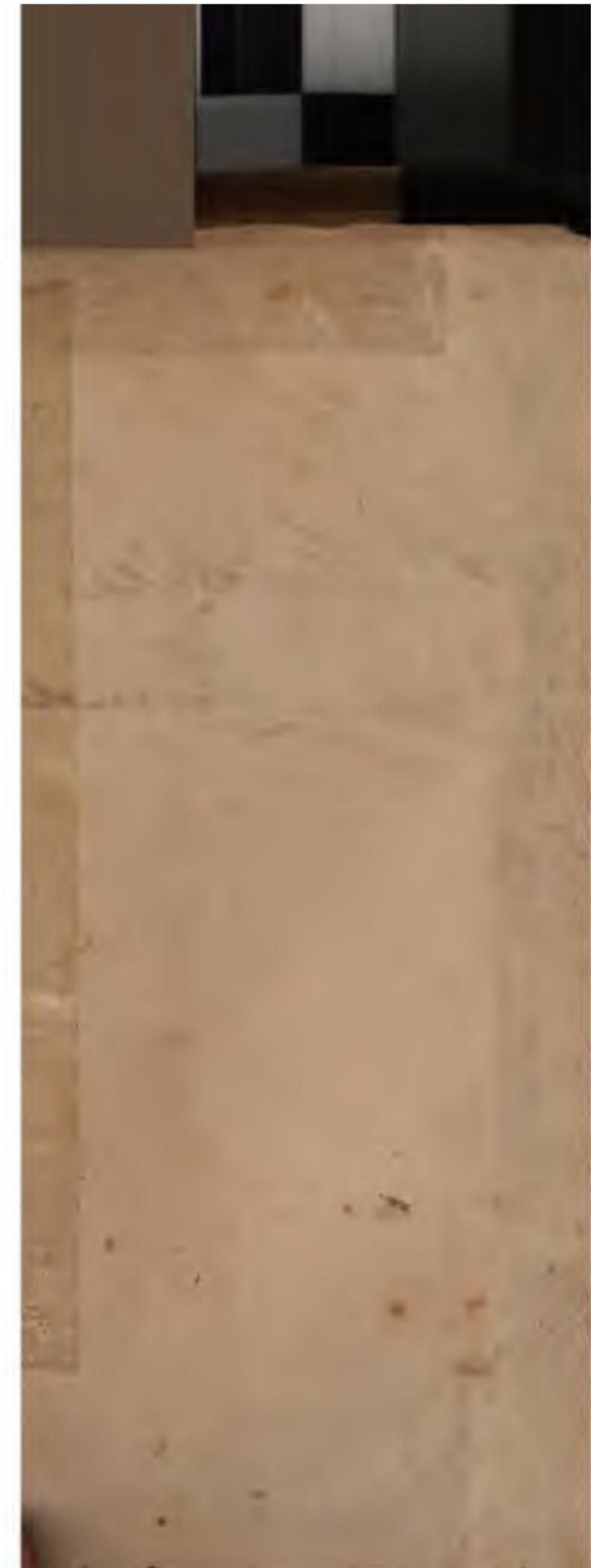




Gift of

Frederick H. Fowler, Esq.

Mrs Haweill
from a Friend







Drawn by A. Clark

Engraved by F. C. Leyland

How is Night's sable mantle labour'd o'er,
How richly wrought with attributes divine!

London, Published by Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., April 1, 1828.

Light Thoughts
ON
Life, Death, & Immortality,
to which is added
A PARAPHRASE ON part of the BOOK OF JOB,
and
The Last Day a Poem
BY
EDWARD YOUNG, LL.D.



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MEMOIRS
OF
DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

EDWARD YOUNG, LL. D. author of the Night Thoughts, and many other excellent pieces, was the only son of Dr. Edward Young, an eminent, learned, and judicious divine; Dean of Sarum, Fellow of Winchester College, and Rector of Upham, in Hampshire. He was born in the year 1684, at Upham, and after being educated in Winchester College, was chosen on the foundation of New College at Oxford, October 13, 1703, when he was nineteen years of age; but, being disqualifed on account of his youth, and there being no vacancy of a fellowship, he removed before the expiration of the year to Corpus Christi, where he entered himself a Gentleman Commoner.

In 1708, he was put into a law fellowship, at All Souls, by Archbishop Tennison. Here he took the degree of B. C. L. in 1714, and in 1719, D. C. L. In this year he published his Tragedy of Busiris; in 1721, the Revenge; and in 1723, the Brothers; about this time he published his elegant poem on the Last Day; which being wrote by a Layman, gave the more satisfaction. He soon after published the Force of Religion, or Vanquished Love, a poem; which also gave much pleasure to most who read it; but more especially to the noble family for whose entertainment it was principally written. Some charge the author with a stiffness of versification in both these Poems; but they met with such success as to procure him the particular

*

A

friendship of several of the nobility, and among the rest, the patronage of the Duke of Wharton; which greatly helped him in his finances. By his Grace's recommendation he put up for member of parliament for Cirencester;* but did not succeed. His noble patron honoured him with his company to All Souls, and, through his instance and persuasion, was at the expence of erecting a considerable part of the new buildings then carrying on in that college. The turn of his mind leading him to divinity, he quitted the law, which he had never practised; and taking orders, was appointed chaplain in ordinary to King George II. April, 1728.

In that year he published a *Vindication of Providence*, in quarto; and soon after, his *Estimate of Human Life*, in the same size: which are thought by many to be the best of his prose performances. In 1730, he was presented by his college to the rectory of Welwyn, in Hertfordshire, reputed worth 300*l* a year, besides the lordship of the manor annexed to it. He was married in 1731, to Lady Betty Lee, widow of Colonel Lee, and daughter to the Earl of Litchfield; (a lady of an eminent genius, and great poetical talents) who brought him a son and heir not long after their marriage.

Though always in high esteem with many of the first rank, he never rose to great preferment. He was a favourite of the late Prince of Wales, his present Majesty's grandfather, and for some years before his death was a pretty constant attendant at court; but upon the Prince's decease, all his hopes of farther rising in the church were at an end; and towards the latter part of his life, his very desire of it seemed to be laid aside; for in his Night

* He was naturally of an ambitious temper and disposition.

Thoughts, he observes, that there was one (meaning himself) in Britain born, with courtiers bred, who thought even wealth might come a day too late; however, upon the death of Dr. Hales in 1761, he was made Clerk of the Closet to the Princess Dowager of Wales.

About the year 1741, he had the unhappiness to lose his wife, and both her children, which she had by her first husband; a son and daughter, very promising characters. They all died within a short time of each other. That he felt greatly for their loss, as well as for that of his lady, may easily be perceived by his fine poem of the *Night Thoughts*, occasioned by it. This was a species of poetry peculiarly his own, and has been unrivalled by all who have attempted to copy him. His applause here was deservedly great. The unhappy bard, "whose grief in melting numbers flow, and melancholy joys diffuse around," has been often sung by the profane as well as pious. They were written, as before observed, under the recent pressure of his sorrow for the loss of his wife, his daughter, and son-in-law. They are addressed to Lorenzo, a man of pleasure and the world, and who, it is generally supposed (and very probably) was his own son, then labouring under his father's displeasure. His son-in-law is said to be characterized by Philander; and his daughter was certainly the person he speaks of under the appellation of Narcissa. See *Night III. l. 62.* In her last illness,* he accompanied her to Montpelier, in the South of France, where she died, soon after her arrival in that city.

After her death, it seems she was denied Chris-

* She died of a consumption, occasioned by her grief for the death of her mother.

tian burial,* on account of being reckoned a Heretic, by the inhabitants of the place; which inhumanity is justly resented in the same beautiful Poem. See Night III. l. 165; in which his wife also is frequently mentioned; and he thus laments the loss of all three, in an apostrophe to death :

* Insatiate archer! could not one suffice?

* Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain:

* And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn."

He wrote his Conjectures on Original Composition when he was turned of eighty. If it has blemishes mixed with its beauties, it is not to be wondered at, when we consider his great age, and the many infirmities which generally attend such an advanced period of life. However, the many excellent remarks this Work abounds with, make it justly esteemed as a brightening before death. The Resignation, a Poem, the last, and the least esteemed of all Dr. Young's Works, was published a short time before his death; and only served to manifest the taper of genius (which had so long shewn with peculiar brightness in him) was now glimmering in the socket. He died in his parsonage-house, at Welwyn, April 12, 1765, and was buried, according to his own desire (attended by all the poor of the parish) under the altar-piece of that church, by the side of his wife.† This altar-piece is reckoned one of the most curious in the kingdom, being adorned

* The priests refusing the Doctor leave to bury his daughter in one of their church-yards, he was obliged, with the assistance of his servant, to dig a grave in a field near Montpelier, where they deposited the body, without the help of any of the inhabitants, who consider Protestants in the same light as they do brutes.

† The bell did not toll at his funeral, nor was any person allowed to be in mourning.

DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

with an elegant piece of needle-work, by the Lady Betty Young.*

Before the Doctor died, he ordered all his manuscripts to be burnt: those that knew how much he expressed in a small compass, and that he never wrote on trivial subjects, will lament both the excess of his modesty (if I may so term it) and the irreparable loss to posterity; especially when it is considered, that he was the intimate acquaintance of Addison; and was himself one of the writers of the Spectators.

In his life-time he published two or three Sermons, one of which was preached before the House of Commons.—He left an only son and heir, Mr. Frederick Young, who had the first part of his education at Winchester school, and becoming a scholar upon the foundation, was sent, in consequence thereof, to New College in Oxford; but there being no vacancy (though the society waited for one no less than two years) he was admitted in the mean time in Balliol College; where he behaved so imprudently as to be forbidden the College. This misconduct disengaged his father so much, that he never would suffer him to come into his sight afterwards: however, by his will, he bequeathed to him, after a few legacies, his whole fortune; which was considerable.

As a Christian and Divine, he might be said to be an example of primeval piety; he gave a remarkable instance of this one Sunday, when preaching in his turn at St. James's; for though he strove

* In the middle of it are inscribed these words: *I am the bread of life.* On the north side of the chancel is this inscription, as supposed by the doctor's order; VIRGINIBUS —*Increase in wisdom and understanding;* and opposite, on the south side, PUERISQUE—*and in favour with God and man.*

See App. to Biog. Brit.

to gain the attention of his audience, when he found he could not prevail, his pity for their folly got the better of all decorum: he set back in the pulpit and burst into a flood of tears.

The turn of his mind was naturally solemn; and he usually, when at home in the country, spent many hours in a day walking among the tombs in his own church-yard. His conversation, as well as writings, had all a reference to a future life; and this turn of mind mixed itself even with his improvements in gardening: he had, for instance, an alcove with a bench so well painted in it, that at a distance it seemed to be real; but upon a nearer approach, the deception was perceived, and this motto appeared:

INVISIBILIA NON DECIPIUNT.

The things unseen do not deceive us.

Yet, notwithstanding this gloominess of temper, he was fond of innocent sports and amusements. He instituted an assembly and a bowling-green in his parish; and often promoted the mirth of the company in person. His wit was ever poignant,* and always levelled at those who shewed any contempt for decency and religion. His Epigram spoken extempore upon Voltaire is well known. Voltaire happening to ridicule Milton's allegorical personages of Death and Sin, Dr. Young thus addressed him:—

Thou art so witty, profligate, and thin,
Thou seem'st a Milton with his Death and Sin.

As to his character as a poet, his composition was instinct in his youth, with as much vanity as was

* In his last illness, a friend of the Doctor's calling to know how he did, and mentioning the death of a person who had been in a decline a long time, said he was quite worn to a shell by the time he died. 'Very likely,' replied the Doctor; 'but what has become of the kernel?'

necessary to excel in that art. He published a Collection of such of his Works as he thought the best, in 1761, in four volumes duodecimo; and another was published since. Among these, his Satires, intitled, the Love of Fame, or, the Universal Passion, are by most considered as his principal performance. They are finely characteristic of that excessive pride, or rather folly, of following prevailing fashions, and aiming to be more than we really are, or can possibly be. They were written in early life; and if smoothness of style, brilliancy of wit, and simplicity of subject, can ensure applause, our author may demand it on this occasion.

After the death of his wife, as he had never given any attention to domestic affairs, so knowing his unfitness for it, he referred the whole care and management of his family to his housekeeper, to whom he left a handsome legacy.

It is observed by Dean Swift, that if Dr. Young, in his Satires, had been more merry or severe, they would have been more generally pleasing; because mankind are more apt to be pleased with ill-nature and mirth than with solid sense and instruction. It is also observed of his Night Thoughts, that though they are chiefly flights of thinking almost super-human; such as the description of Death, from his secret stand, noting down the follies of a Bacchanalian Society; the Epitaph upon the Departed World; and the issuing of Satan from his dungeon; yet these, and a great number of other remarkable fine thoughts, are sometimes overcast with an air of gloominess and melancholy,* which have a disagreeable tendency, and must be unpleasing to a

* The Night Thoughts undoubtedly have their defects, as well as beauties; but 'tis generally allowed, the latter are far more numerous, and so remarkably striking and con-

cheerful mind; however, it must be acknowledged by all, that they evidence a singular genius, a lively fancy, an extensive knowledge of men and things, especially of the feelings of the human heart, and paint, in the strongest colours, the vanity of life, and all its fading honours and emoluments, the benefits of true piety, especially in the views of death, and the most unanswerable arguments in support of the soul's immortality, and a future state.

G. W.

spurious to the discerning reader, as in his view to eclipse the failings which otherwise might be discovered therein.

Dr. Young was convinced of the impropriety of writing the *Night Thoughts* in a style so much above the understanding of common readers; and said to a friend, a week or two before he died, that was he to publish such another Treatise (respecting subjects) it should be in less elevated language, and more suited to the capacities of all.

CONTENTS.

	THE COMPLAINT.	Page
Night I. On Life, Death, and Immortality . . .	1	
Night II. On Time, Death, and Friendship . . .	14	
Night III. Narcissa	33	
Night IV. The Christian Triumph	48	
Night V. The Relapse	70	
Night VI. The Infidel Reclaimed. Part I. . .	99	
Night VII. The Infidel Reclaimed. Part II. . .	122	
Night VIII. Virtue's Apology	160	

THE CONSOLATION.

Night IX. Containing, among other things,		
1. A Moral Survey of the Nocturnal Heavens	195	
2. A Night Address to the Deity	251	

THE LAST DAY.

Book I.	259	
Book II.	267	
Book III.	278	

PARAPHRASE ON PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB. 287

THE
Complaint.

NIGHT I.

ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

*To the Right Hon. Arthur Onslow, Esq. Speaker of
the House of Commons.*

TIR'D Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep!
He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where Fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes:
Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsullied with a tear.

From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose
I wake: how happy they who wake no more!
Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.
I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
Tumultuous; where my wreck'd desponding thought
From wave to wave of fancied misery
At random drove, her helm of reason lost.
Though now restor'd 'tis only change of pain,
(A bitter change!) severer for severe:
The day too short for my distress; and night,
E'en in the zenith of her dark domain,
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.

Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world,
Silence how dead! and darkness how profound!
Nor eye nor listening ear an object finds;

ON LIFE, DEATH, & IMMORTALITY. 3

It is the signal that demands dispatch:
How much is to be done? My hopes and fears
Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge
Look down—on what? A fathomless abyss;
A dread eternity! how surely mine!
And can eternity belong to me,
Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour?

How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful, is man!
How passing wonder HE who made him such!
Who center'd in our make such strange extremes
From different natures marvellously mix'd,
Connexion exquisite of distant worlds!
Distinguish'd link in being's endless chain!
Midway from nothing to the Deity!
A beam ethereal, sullied and absorpt!
Though sullied and dishonour'd, still divine!
Dim miniature of greatness absolute!
An heir of glory! a frail child of dust!
Helpless immortal! insect infinite!
A worm! a god!—I tremble at myself,
And in myself am lost. At home, a stranger,
Thought wanders up and down, surpris'd, aghast,
And wondering at her own. How reason reels!
O what a miracle to man is man!
Triumphantly distress'd! what joy! what dread!
Alternately transported and alarm'd!
What can preserve my life! or what destroy!
An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave;
Legions of angels can't confine me there.

'Tis past conjecture; all things rise in proof.
While o'er my limbs Sleep's soft dominion spread,
What though my soul fantastic measures trod
O'er fairy fields, or mourn'd along the gloom
Of pathless woods, or down the craggy steep
Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool,
Or scal'd the cliff, or danc'd on hollow winds
With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain!

Her ceaseless flight, though devious, speaks her nature
Of subtler essence than the trodden clod;
Active, aerial, towering, unconfin'd,
Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.
E'en silent night proclaims my soul immortal;
E'en silent night proclaims eternal day!
For human weal Heaven husbands all events:
Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Why then their loss deplore that are not lost?
Why wanders wretched Thought their tombs around
In infidel distress? Are angels there?
Slumbers, rak'd up in dust, ethereal fire?

They live! they greatly live a life on earth
Unkindled, unconceiv'd, and from an eye
Of tenderness let heavenly pity fall
On me, more justly number'd with the dead.
This is the desert, this the solitude:
How populous, how vital is the grave!
This is Creation's melancholy vault,
The vale funereal, the sad cypress gloom;
The land of apparitions, empty shades!
All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond
Is substance; the reverse is Folly's creed.
How solid all, where change shall be no more!

This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
The twilight of our day, the vestibule.
Life's theatre as yet is shut, and Death,
Strong Death, alone can heave the massy bar,
This gross impediment of clay remove,
And make us, embryos of existence, free.
From real life, but little more remote
Is he, not yet a candidate for light,
The future embryo, slumbering in his sire.
Embryos we must be till we burst the shell,
Yon ambient azure shell, and spring to life,
The life of gods, O transport! and of man.

Yet man, fool man! here buries all his thoughts,
Inters celestial hopes without one sigh;

ON LIFE, DEATH, & IMMORTALITY. 5

Prisoner of earth and pent beneath the moon,
Here pinions all his wishes; wing'd by Heav'n
To fly at infinite, and reach it there,
Where seraphs gather immortality,
On Life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God.
What golden joys ambrosial clustering glow
In his full beam, and ripen for the just,
Where momentary ages are no more!
Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death expire!
And is it in the flight of threescore years
To push eternity from human thought,
And smother souls immortal in the dust?
A soul immortal, spending all her fires,
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,
Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd
At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,
Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

Where falls this censure? it o'erwhelms myself,
How was my heart incrusted by the world!
O how self-fetter'd was my groveling soul!
How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round
In silken thought, which reptile Fancy spun,
Till darken'd Reason lay quite clouded o'er
With soft conceit of endless comfort here,
Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies!

Night-visions may befriend (as sung above :)
Our waking dreams are fatal. How I dreamt
Of things impossible! (could sleep do more?)
Of joys perpetual in perpetual change!
Of stable pleasures on the toasing wave;
Eternal sunshine in the storms of life!
How richly were my noon-tide trances hung
With gorgeous tapestries of pictur'd joys!
Joy behind joy, in endless perspective!
Till at Death's toll, whose restless iron tongue
Calls daily for his millions at a meal,
Starting I woke, and found myself undone.

Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture?
The cobweb'd cottage, with its ragged wall
Of mouldering mud, is royalty to me!
The spider's most attenuated thread
Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie
On earthly bliss: it breaks at every breeze.
O ye blest scenes of permanent delight!
Full above measure! lasting beyond bound!
A perpetuity of bliss is bliss.
Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,
And quite unparadise the realms of light.
Safe are you lodg'd above these rolling spheres,
The baleful influence of whose giddy dance
Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.
Here teems with revolutions every hour,
And rarely for the better; or the best
More mortal than the common births of Fate.
Each Moment has its sickle, emulous
Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep
Strikes empires from the root: each Moment plays
His little weapon in the narrower sphere
Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down
The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.
Bliss! sublunary bliss!—proud words, and vain!
Implicit treason to divine decree!
A bold invasion of the rights of Heav'n!
I clasp'd the phantoms, and I found them air.
O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace,
What darts of agony had miss'd my heart!
Death! great proprietor of all! 'tis thine
To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.
The sun himself by thy permission shines,
And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere:
Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust
Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean?
Why thy peculiar rancour wreak'd on me?
Insatiate archer! could not one suffice? -

ON LIFE, DEATH, & IMMORTALITY. 7

Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain;
And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.
O Cynthia! why so pale? dost thou lament
Thy wretched neighbour? grieve to see thy wheel
Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life?
How wanes my borrow'd bliss! from Fortune's smile,
Precarious courtesy! not virtue's sure,
Self-given, solar ray of sound delight.

In every varied posture, place, and hour,
How widow'd every thought of every joy!
Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace!
Through the dark postern of time long elaps'd,
Led softly, by the stillness of the night,
Led, like a murderer, (and such it proves!)
Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past;
In quest of wretchedness perversely strays,
And finds all desert now; and meets the ghosts
Of my departed joys, a numerous train!
I rue the riches of my former fate;
Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament;
I tremble at the blessings once so dear,
And every pleasure pains me to the heart.

Yet why complain? or why complain for one?
Hangs out the sun his lustre but for me,
The single man? are angels all beside?
I mourn for millions; 'tis the common lot:
In this shape or in that has Fate entail'd
The mother's throes on all of woman born,
Not more the children than sure heirs of pain.

War, famine, pest, volcano, storm, and fire,
Intestine broils, Oppression, with her heart
Wrapt up in triple brass, besiege mankind.
God's image, disinherited of day,
Here plung'd in mines, forgets a sun was made;
There beings, deathless as their haughty lord,
Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life,
And plough the winter's wave, and reap despair.
Some for hard masters, broken under arms,

In battle lopt away, with half their limbs,
Beg bitter bread through realms their valour sav'd,
If so the tyrant or his minion doom.
Want, and incurable disease, (fell pair!)
On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize
At once, and make a refuge of the grave.
How groaning hospitals eject their dead!
What numbers groan for sad admission there!
What numbers, once in Fortune's lap high-fed,
Solicit the cold hand of Charity!
To shock us more, solicit it in vain!
Ye silken sons of Pleasure! since in pains
You rue more modish visits, visit here,
And breathe from your debauch: give, and reduce
Surfeit's dominion o'er you. But so great
Your impudence, you blush at what is right.
Happy! did sorrow seize on such alone.
Not prudence can defend, or virtue save;
Disease invades the chaste temperance,
And punishment the guiltless; and alarm,
Through thickest shades, pursues the fond of peace.
Man's caution often into danger turns,
And, his guard falling, crushes him to death.
Not Happiness itself makes good her name;
Our very wishes give us not our wish.
How distant oft the thing we dote on most
From that for which we dote, felicity?
The smoothest course of Nature has its pains,
And truest friends, through error, wound our rest.
Without misfortune what calamities!
And what hostilities without a foe!
Nor are foes wanting to the best on earth.
But endless is the list of human ills.
And sighs might sooner fail than cause to sigh.
A part how small of the terraqueous globe
Is tenanted by man! the rest a waste,
Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands!
Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death.

menacing fate wide opens to devour.
I then am I, who sorrow for myself?
, in infancy, from others' aid
our hope; to teach us to be kind:
Nature's first, last lesson to mankind.
elfish heart deserves the pain it feels.
generous sorrow, while it sinks exalts,
conscious virtue mitigates the pang.
virtue more than prudence bids me give
I thought a second channel: who divide,
weaken, too, the torrent of their grief.
then, O World! thy much-indebted tear.
sad a sight is human happiness
ose whose thought can pierce beyond an hour!
u! whate'er thou art, whose heart exalts,
Ist thou I should congratulate thy fate?
v thou wouldst; thy pride demands it from me:
y pride pardon what thy nature needs,
alutary censure of a friend.
happy wretch! by blindness thou art blest;
stage dandled to perpetual smiles.
, smiler! at thy peril art thou pleas'd;
pleasure is the promise of thy pain.
rtune, like a creditor severe,
ises in demand for her delay;
akes a scourge of past prosperity,
ing thee more, and double thy distress.
enzo! Fortune makes her court to thee;
lond heart dances while the syren sings.
is thy welfare; think me not unkind;
ld not damp, but to secure thy joys.
k not that fear is sacred to the storm;

Stand on thy guard against the smiles of Fate.
Is Heav'n tremendous in its frowns? most sure;
And in its favours formidable too:
Its favours here are trials, not rewards;
A call to duty, not discharge from care,
And should alarm us full as much as woes,
Awake us to their cause and consequence,
And make us tremble, weigh'd with our desert;
Awe Nature's tumult, and chastise her joys,
Lest while we clasp we kill them; nay, invert
To worse than simple misery their charms.
Revolted joys, like foes in civil war,
Like bosom friendships to resentment sour'd,
With rage envenom'd rise against our peace.
Beware what earth calls happiness; beware
All joys but joys that never can expire.
Who builds on less than an immortal base,
Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.
Mine died with thee, Philander; thy last sigh
Dissolv'd the charm; the disenchanted earth
Lost all her lustre. Where her glittering towers?
Her golden mountains where? all darken'd down
To naked waste; a dreary vale of tears.
The great magician's dead! Thou poor, pale piece
Of outcast earth, in darkness! what a change
From yesterday! Thy darling hope so near,
(Long-labour'd prize!) O how ambition flush'd
Thy glowing cheek! ambition truly great,
Of virtuous praise. Death's subtle seed within,
(Sly, treacherous miner!) working in the dark,
Smil'd at thy well-concerted scheme, and beckon'd
The worm to riot on that rose so red,
Unfaded ere it fell, one moment's prey!
Man's foresight is conditionally wise.
Lorenzo! wisdom into folly turns,
Oft the first instant its idea fair
To labouring thought is born. How dim our eye!
The present moment terminates our sight;

ON LIFE, DEATH, & IMMORTALITY. 11

Clouds, thick as those on Doomsday, drown the next;
We penetrate, we prophesy in vain,
Time is dealt out by particles, and each
Ere mingled with the streaming sands of life.
By Fate's inviolable oath is sworn
Deep silence, "Where eternity begins."

By Nature's law what may be may be now;
There's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thought can rise
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?
Where is to-morrow? In another world.
For numbers this is certain; the reverse
Is sure to none; and yet on this *perhaps*,
This *peradventure*, infamous for lies,
As on a rock of adamant we build
Our mountain-hopes, spin out eternal schemes,
As we the Fatal Sisters could outspin,
And, big with life's futurities, expire.

Not e'en Philander had bespoke his shroud;
Nor had he cause; a warning was denied.
How many fall as sudden, not as safe?
As sudden, though for years admonish'd home;
Of human ills the last extreme beware;
Beware, Lorenzo! a slow-sudden death,
How dreadful that deliberate surprise!
Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer;
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.
Procrastination is the thief of time;
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.
If not so frequent, would not this be strange?
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.

Of man's miraculous mistakes this bears
The palm, "That all men are about to live,"
For ever on the brink of being born:
All pay themselves the compliment to think

12 THE COMPLAINT. Night I.

They one day shall not drivel, and their pride
On this reversion takes up ready praise;
At least their own; their future selves applauds,
How excellent that life they ne'er will lead!
Time lodg'd in their own hands is Folly's vails;
That lodg'd in Fate's to wisdom they consign;
The thing they can't but purpose, they postpone.
'Tis not in folly not to scorn a fool,
And scarce in human wisdom to do more.
All promise is poor dilatory man,
And that through every stage. When young, indeed,
In full content we sometimes nobly rest,
Unanxious for ourselves, and only wish,
As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise.
At thirty man suspects himself a fool;
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;
At fifty chides his infamous delay,
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;
In all the magnanimity of thought
Resolves, and re-resolves; then dies the same.

And why? because he thinks himself immortal.
All men think all men mortal but themselves;
Themselves, when some alarming shock of Fate
Strikes thro' their wounded hearts the sudden dread:
But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
Soon close; where past the shaft no trace is found,
As from the wing no scar the sky retains,
The parted wave no furrow from the keel,
So dies in human hearts the thought of death:
E'en with the tender tear which nature sheds
O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.
Can I forget Philander? that were strange!
O my full heart!—But should I give it vent,
The longest night, though longer far, would fail,
And the lark listen to my midnight song.
The sprightly lark's shrill matin wakes the morn.
Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,
I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer

my griefs, and steal my heart from woe!
heir raptures, but not catch their fire.
hough not blind, like thee, Mæonides!
lton! thee; ah, could I reach your strain!
who made Maconides our own.
yo, he sung: immortal man I sing:
sts my song beyond the bounds of life:
now, but immortality can please?
he press'd his theme, pursued the track
opens out of darkness into day!
he mounted on his wing of fire,
where I sink, and sung immortal man,
nd it bles'd mankind, and rescued me!

16 THE COMPLAINT. Night II.

Who wants amusement in the flame of battle?
Is it not treason to the soul immortal,
Her foes in arms, eternity the prize?
Will toys amuse when med'cines cannot cure?
When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scenes
Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,
As lands, and cities with their glittering spires,
To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm
Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there;
Will toys amuse? No; thrones will then be toys,
And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.
Redeem we time?—Its loss we dearly buy.
What pleads Lorenzo for his high-priz'd sports?
He pleads time's numerous blanks; he loudly pleads
The straw-like trifles on life's common stream,
From whom those blanks and trifles but from thee?
No blank, no trifle, Nature made, or meant.
Virtue, or purpos'd virtue, still be thine;
This cancels thy complaint at once; this leaves
In act no trifle, and no blank in time.
This greatens, fills, immortalizes all;
This the blest art of turning all to gold;
This the good heart's prerogative to raise
A royal tribute from the poorest hours;
Immense revenue! every moment pays.
If nothing more than purpose in thy pow'r,
Thy purpose firm is equal to the deed.
Who does the best his circumstance allows
Does well, acts nobly; angels could no more.
Our outward act, indeed, admits restraint:
'Tis not in things o'er thought to domineer; [heav'u.
Guard well thy thought; our thoughts are heard in
On all-important time, through ev'ry age,
Tho' much, and warm, the wise have urg'd, the man
Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour,
'I've lost a day,'—the prince who nobly cried,
Had been an emperor without his crown,
Of Rome? say, rather, lord of human race:
He spoke as if deputed by mankind.

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP. 17

bold all speak : so reason speaks in all :
the soft whispers of that God in man,
fly to folly, why to frenzy fly,
rescue from the blessings we possess?
the supreme!—Time is eternity ;
ant with all eternity can give ;
ant with all that makes archangels smile.
murders Time, he crushes in the birth
ver ethereal, only not ador'd.
how unjust to Nature and himself
ightless, thankless, inconsistent man !
children babbling nonsense in their sports,
ensure Nature for a span too short ;
span too short we tax as tedious too ;
re invention, all expedients tire,
sh the lingering moments into speed,
whirl us (happy riddance !) from ourselves.
braainless Art ! our furious charioteer,
Nature's voice unstifled would recall
a headlong tow'rds the precipice of death ;
most our dread; death thus more dreadful made.
at a riddle of absurdity!
re is pain ; takes off our chariot-wheels ;
heavily we drag the load of life !
leisure is our curse ; like that of Cain,
kes us wander, wander earth around,
that tyrant Thought. As Atlas groan'd
world beneath, we groan beneath an hour ;
ry for mercy to the next amusement ;
ext amusement mortgages our fields ;
inconvenience ! prisons hardly frown,
hateful time if prisons set us free.
hen Death kindly tenders us relief,
ll him cruel ; years to moments shrink,
to years. The telescope is turn'd :
m's false optics (from his folly false)
in advance, behind him hides his wings,
eems to creep, decrepit with his age.
d him when past by ; what then is seen.

When worlds, that count his circles now, unking'd,
(Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush
To timeless night and chaos, whence they rose.

Why spur the speedy? why with levities
New-wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight?
Know'st thou or what thou dost, or what is done?
Man flies from time, and time from man; too soon,
In sad divorce, this double flight must end;
And then where are we? where, Lorenzo! then,
Thy sports, thy pomps? I grant thee in a state
Not unambitious; in the ruffled shroud,
Thy Parian tomb's triumphant arch beneath.
Has Death his copperies? then well may Life
Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.

Ye well-array'd! ye lilies of our land!
Ye lilies male! who neither toil nor spin,
(As sister lilies might) if not so wise
As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight!
Ye delicate! who nothing can support,
Yourselves most insupportable! for whom
The winter rose must blow, the sun put on
A brighter beam in Leo; silky-soft
Favonius! breathe still softer, or be chid;
And other worlds send odours, sauce, and song,
And robes, and notions, fram'd in foreign looms!
O ye Lorenzos of our age! who deem
One moment unamus'd a misery
Not made for feeble man! who call aloud
For every bawble drivell'd o'er by sense;
For rattles and conceits of every cast;
For change of follies and relays of joy,
To drag your patient through the tedious length
Of a short winter's day—say, sages! say,
Wit's oracles! say, dreamers of gay dreams!
How will you weather an eternal night,
Where such expedients fail?

O treacherous Conscience! while she seems to sleep
On rose and myrtle, lull'd with syren song;
While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP. 21

On headlong Appetite the slacken'd rein,
And give us up to license, unrecall'd,
Unmark'd ;—see, from behind her secret stand,
The sly informer minutes every fault,
And her dread diary with horror fills.
Not the gross act alone employs her pen ;
She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band.
A watchful foe ! the formidable spy
Listening, o'erhears the whispers of our camp,
Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
And steals our embryos of iniquity.
As all-rapacious usurers conceal
Their doomsday-book from all-consuming heirs,
Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats
Us spendthrifts of inestimable time,
Unnoted, notes each moment misapply'd ;
In leaves more durable than leaves of brass
Writes our whole history, which Death shall read
In every pale delinquent's private ear,
And judgment publish ; publish to more worlds
Than this, and endless age in groans resound.
Lorenzo! such that sleeper in thy breast ;
Such is her slumber, and her vengeance such
For slighted counsel ; such thy future peace ;
And think'st thou still thou canst be wise too soon ?

But why on time so lavish is my song ?
On this great theme kind nature keeps a school
To teach her sons herself. Each night we die ;
Each morn are born anew : each day a life !
And shall we kill each day ? If trifling kills,
Sure vice must butcher. O what heaps of slain
Cry out for vengeance on us ! Time destroy'd
Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.
Time flies, death urges, knells call, Heav'n invites,
Hell threatens : all exerts ; in effort all,
More than creation, labours ! Labours more ?
And is there in creation what, amidst
This tumult universal, wing'd dispatch,
And ardent energy, supinely yawns : —

Man sleeps, and man alone; and man, whose fate,
Fate irreversible, entire, extreme,
Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulf
A moment trembles; drops! and man, for whom
All else is in alarm; man, the sole cause
Of this surrounding storm! and yet he sleeps,
As the storm rock'd to rest.—Throw years away?
Throw empires, and be blameless: moments seize,
Heaven's on their wing: a moment we may wish,
When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid Day stand still,
Bid him drive back his car, and reimport
The period past, regive the given hour.
Lorenzo! more than miracles we want,
Lorenzo—O for yesterdays to come!

Such is the language of the man awake,
His ardour such for what oppresses thee.
And is his ardour vain, Lorenzo? No;
That more than miracle the gods indulge,
To-day is yesterday return'd; return'd
Full-power'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,
And reinstate us on the rock of peace.
Let it not share its predecessor's fate,
Nor, like its elder sisters, die a fool.
Shall it evaporate in fume, fly off
Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still?
Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd?
More wretched for the clemencies of Heav'n?

Where shall I find him? Angels! tell me where;
You know him: he is near you; point him out.
Shall I see glories beaming from his brow,
Or trace his footsteps by the rising flowers?
Your golden wings, now hovering o'er him, shed
Protection; now are waving in applause
To that blest son of foresight! lord of fate!
That awful independent on to-morrow!
Whose work is done; who triumphs in the past;
Whose yesterdays look backwards with a smile,
Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly;
That common but opprobrious lot! Past hours,

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP. 23

If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,
If folly bounds our prospect by the grave,
All feeling of futurity benumb'd;
All godlike passion for eternals quench'd;
All relish of realities expir'd;
Renounc'd all correspondence with the skies;
Our freedom chain'd; quite wingless our desire;
In sense dark-prison'd all that ought to soar;
Prone to the centre; crawling in the dust;
Dismounted every great and glorious aim;
Imbruted every faculty divine;
Heart-buried in the rubbish of the world,
The world, that gulf of souls, immortal souls,
Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire
To reach the distant skies, and triumph there
On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters chang'd;
Though we from earth, ethereal they that fell.
Such veneration due, O man, to man!

Who venerate themselves the world despise.
For what, gay friend! is this escutcheon'd world,
Which hangs out death in one eternal night?
A night that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,
And wraps our thought at banquets in the shroud.
Life's little stage is a small eminence,
Inch high the grave above, that home of man,
Where dwells the multitude: we gaze around;
We read their monuments; we sigh; and while
We sigh we sink; and are what we deplo'red:
Lamenting or lamented all our lot!

Is Death at distance? No; he has been on thee,
And giv'n sure earnest of his final blow.
Those hours that lately smil'd, where are they now?
Pallid to thought, and ghastly! drown'd, all drown'd
In that great deep which nothing disengages!
And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown.
The rest are on the wing: how fleet their flight!
Already has the fatal train took fire;
A moment, and the world's blown up to thee;
The sun is darkness, and the stars are dust.

24 THE COMPLAINT. Night II.

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past Hours,
And ask them what report they bore to Heav'n,
And howthey might have borne more welcome news.
Their answers form what men Experience call;
If Wisdom's friend her best, if not, worst foe.
O reconcile them! kind Experience cries,
'There's nothing here but what as nothing weighs;
The more our joy, the more we know it vain,
And by success are tutor'd to despair.'
Nor is it only thus, but must be so,
Who knows not this, though grey, is still a child.
Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire,
Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

Art thou so moor'd thou canst not disengage,
Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes?
Since by life's passing breath, blown up from earth,
Light as the summer's dust, we take in air
A moment's giddy flight, and fall again,
Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,
And sleep, till Earth herself shall be no more;
Since then (as emmets, their small world o'erthrown)
We, sore-amaz'd, from out earth's ruins crawl,
And rise to fate extreme of foul or fair,
As man's own choice, (controller of the skies!)
As man's despotic will, perhaps one hour,
(O how omnipotent is time!) decrees,
Should not each warning give a strong alarm?
Warning, far less than that of bosom torn
From bosom, bleeding o'er the sacred dead!
Should not each dial strike us as we pass,
Portentous, as the written wall which struck,
O'er midnight bowls, the proud Assyrian pale,
Ere-while high-flush'd with insolence and wine?
Like that, the dial speaks, and points to thee,
Lorenzo ! loth to break thy banquet up:
'O Man ! thy kingdom is departing from thee,
And while it lasts is emptier than my shade.'

Its silent language such; nor need'st thou call
Thy Magi to decipher what it means.

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP. 25

Know, like the Median, Fate is in thy walls :
Dost ask how? whence? Belshazzar-like, amaz'd.
Man's make incloses the sure seeds of death;
Life feeds the murderer : ingrate! he thrives
On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.

But here, Lorenzo, the delusion lies ;
That solar shadow, as it measures life,
It life resembles too. Life speeds away
From point to point, though seeming to stand still.
The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth :
Too subtle is the movement to be seen ;
Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.
Warnings point out our danger ; gnomons, time :
As these are useless when the sun is set,
So those, but when more glorious Reason shines,
Reason should judge in all ; in Reason's eye
That sedentary shadow travels hard :
But such our gravitation to the wrong,
So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,
'Tis later with the wise than he's aware.
A Wilmington goes slower than the sun ;
And all mankind mistake their time of day ;
Ev'n age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown
In furrow'd brows. So gentle life's descent,
We shut our eyes, and think it is a plain.
We take fair days in winter for the spring,
And turn our blessings into bane. Since oft
Man must compute that age he cannot feel,
He scarce believes he's older for his years.
Thus at life's latest eve we keep in store
One disappointment, sure to crown the rest,
The disappointment of a promis'd hour.

On this or similar, Philander! thou
Whose mind was moral as the preacher's tongue,
And strong to wield all science worth the name,
How often we talk'd down the summer's sun,
And cool'd our passions by the breezy stream!
How often thaw'd and shorten'd winter's eve

By conflict kind, and struck out latent truth,
Best found so sought, to the recluse more coy!
Thoughts disintangle passing o'er the lip;
Clean runs the thread; if not, 'tis thrown away,
Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song:
Song fashionably fruitless, such as stains
The fancy, and unhallow'd passion fires,
Chiming her saints to Cytherea's fane.

Know'st thou, Lorenzo! what a friend contains?
As bees mix'd nectar draw from fragrant flowers,
So men from Friendship, wisdom and delight;
Twins tied by Nature, if they part they die.
Hast thou no friend to set thy mind abroach?
Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up want air,
And spoil, like bales unopen'd to the sun.
Had thought been all, sweet speech had been denied;
Speech!thought's canal;speech!thought's criterion too:
Thought in the mine may come forth gold or dross;
When coin'd in word, we know its real worth:
If sterling, store it for thy future use;
"Twill buy thee benefit, perhaps renown.
Thought too, deliver'd, is the more possess'd;
Teaching we learn, and giving we retain
The births of intellect, when dumb forgot.
Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;
Speech burnishes our mental magazine;
Brightens for ornament, and whets for use.
What numbers, sheath'd in erudition, lie
Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,
And rusted in, who might have borne an edge,
And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to speech,
If born blest heirs of half their mother's tongue!
"Tis thought's exchange, which like th' alternate push
Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,
And defecates the student's standing pool.

In contemplation is his proud resource?
"Tis poor as proud, by converse unsustain'd.
Rude thought runs wild in Contemplation's field;

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP. 27

Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit
Of due restraint; and Emulation's spur
Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.
'Tis converse qualifies for solitude,
As exercise for salutary rest:
By that untutor'd, Contemplation raves;
And Nature's fool by Wisdom's is outdone.

Wisdom, though richer than Peruvian mines,
And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,
What is she but the means of happiness?
That unobtain'd, than Folly more a fool;
A melancholy fool, without her bells,
Friendship, the means of wisdom, richly gives
The precious end which makes our wisdom wise.
Nature, in zeal for human amity,
Denies or damps an undivided joy.
Joy is an import; joy is an exchange;
Joy flies monopolists: it calls for two:
Rich fruit! heav'n-planted! never pluck'd by one.
Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give
To social man true relish of himself.
Full on ourselves descending in a line,
Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight:
Delight intense is taken by rebound;
Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

Celestial Happiness! whene'er she stoops
To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,
And one alone to make her sweet amends
For absent Heav'n—the bosom of a friend;
Where heart meets heart reciprocally soft,
Each other's pillow to repose divine.
Beware the counterfeit; in passion's flame
Hearts melt, but melt like ice, soon harder froze.
True love strikes root in reason, passion's foe;
Virtue alone intenders us for life:
I wrong her much—intenders us for ever.
Of friendship's fairest fruits, the fruit most fair
Is virtue kindling at a rival fire,

What friends might flatter, prudent foes forbear,
Rivals scarce damn, and Zoilus reprieve.
Yet what I can I must: it were profane
To quench a glory lighted at the skies,
And cast in shadows his illustrious close.
Strange! the theme most affecting, most sublime,
Momentous most to man, should sleep unsung!
And yet it sleeps, by genius unawak'd,
Panim or Christian, to the blush of Wit.
Man's highest triumph, man's profoundest fall,
The death-bed of the just! is yet undrawn
By mortal hand; it merits a divine:
Angels should paint it, angels ever there,
There on a post of honour and of joy.

Dare I presume, then? but Philander bids,
And glory tempts, and inclination calls.
Yet am I struck, as struck the soul beneath
Aërial groves' impenetrable gloom,
Or in some mighty ruin's solemn shade,
Or gazing, by pale lamps, on high-born dust
In vaults, thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings,
Or at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame.
It is religion to proceed: I pause—
And enter, aw'd, the temple of my theme.
Is it his death-bed? No; it is his shrine;
Behold him there just rising to a god.

The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileg'd beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of Heav'n.
Fly, ye profane! if not, draw near with awe,
Receive the blessing, and adore the chance
That threw in this Bethesda your disease:
If unrestor'd by this, despair your cure;
For here resistless Demonstration dwells.
A death bed's a detector of the heart.
Here tir'd Dissimulation drops her mask
Through Life's grimace, that mistress of the scene!
Here real and apparent are the same.

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP. 31

You see the man, you see his hold on Heav'n,
If sound his virtue, as Philander's sound.
Heav'n waits not the last moment; owns her friends
On this side death, and points them out to men;
A lecture silent, but of sovereign pow'r!
To Vice confusion, and to Virtue peace.

Whate'er farce the boastful hero plays,
Virtue alone has majesty in death,
And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns.
Philander! he severely frown'd on thee.
'No warning giv'n! unceremonious fate!
A sudden rush from life's meridian joys!
A wrench from all we love! from all we are!
A restless bed of pain! a plunge opaque
Beyond conjecture! feeble Nature's dread!
Strong Reason's shudder, at the dark unknown!
A sun extinguish'd! a just-opening grave!
And, oh! the last, last; what? (can words express,
Thought reach it?) the last—silence of a friend?
Where are those horrors, that amazement where,
This hideous group of ills which singly shock,
Demand from man.—I thought him man till now.

Thro' Nature's wreck, thro' vanquish'd agonies,
(Like the stars struggling thro' this midnight gloom)
What gleams of joy? what more than human peace?
Where the frail mortal, the poor abject worm?
No, not in death the mortal to be found.
His conduct is a legacy for all,
Richer than Mammon's for his single heir.
His comforters he comforts; great in ruin
With unreluctant grandeur gives, not yields
His soul sublime, and closes with his fate.

How our hearts burnt within us at the scene!
Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man?
His God sustains him in his final hour!
His final hour brings glory to his God!
Man's glory Heav'n vouchsafes to call her own.
We gaze, we weep; mix'd tears of grief and joy!

Amazement strikes! devotion bursts to flame!
Christians adore! and infidels believe.

As some tall tow'r, or lofty mountain's brow,
Detains the sun, illustrious, from its height,
While rising vapours and descending shades,
With damps and darkness drown the spacious vale,
Undampt by doubt, undarken'd by despair,
Philander thus augustly rears his head,
At that black hour which general horror sheds
On the low level of th' inglorious throng:
Sweet peace, and heavenly hope, and humble joy,
Divinely beam on his exalted soul;
Destruction gild and crown him for the skies
With incommunicable lustre bright.

THE
Complaint.

—
NIGHT III.
—

NARCISSA.

Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere menes. Virg.

Inscribed to her Grace the Duchess of Portland.

FROM dreams, where thought in Fancy's maze
runs mad,
To reason, that heav'n-lighted lamp in man,
Once more I wake; and at the destin'd hour,
Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,
I keep my assignation with my woe.
O! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,
Lost to the noble sallies of the soul!
Who think it solitude to be alone.
Communion sweet! communion large and high!
Our reason, guardian-angel, and our god!
Then nearest these, when others most remote;
And all, ere long, shall be remote but these:
How dreadful, then, to meet them all alone,
A stranger! unacknowledg'd! unprov'd!
Now woo them, wed them, bind them to thy breast:
To win thy wish creation has no more:
Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend.—
But friends how mortal! dangerous the desire.
Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking bards!
Inebriate at fair Fortune's fountain-head,

56 THE COMPLAINT. Night III.

Of bright ideas, flowers of Paradise,
As yet unforfeit! in one blaze we bind,
Kneel, and present it to the skies, as all
We guess of Heav'n; and these were all her own;
And she was mine; and I was—was!—most blest—
Gay title of the deepest misery!
As bodies grow more pond'rous robb'd of life,
Good lost weighs more in grief than gain'd in joy.
Like blossom'd trees o'erturn'd by vernal storm,
Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay;
And if in death still lovely, lovelier there,
Far lovelier! pity swells the tide of love.
And will not the severe excuse a sigh?
Scorn the proud man that is ashamed to weep.
Our tears indulg'd indeed deserve our shame.
Ye that e'er lost an angel, pity me!

Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,
Dawning a dimmer day on human sight,
And on her cheek, the residence of Spring,
Pale Omen sat, and scatter'd fears around
On all that saw, (and who would cease to gaze
That once had seen?) with haste, parental haste,
I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid North,
Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,
And bore her nearer to the sun; the sun
(As if the sun could envy) check'd his beam,
Denied his wonted succour; nor with more
Regret beheld her drooping than the bells
Of lilies; fairest lilies, not so fair!

Queen lilies! and ye painted populace
Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives!
In morn and evening dew your beauties bathe,
And drink the sun, which gives your cheeks to glow,
And outblush (mine excepted) every fair;
You gladlier grew, ambitions of her hand,
Which often cropt your odours, incense meet
To thought so pure! Ye lovely fugitives!
Coëval race with man! for man you smile;

Night III. — NARCISSA.

37

Why not smile at him too? You share, indeed,
His sudden pass; but not his constant pain.

So man is made nought ministers delight
But what his glowing passions can engage;
And glowing passions, bent on aught below,
Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale;
And anguish after rapture, how severe!
Rapture? bold man! who tempts the wrath divine,
By plucking fruit denied to mortal taste,
While here presuming on the rights of Heav'n.
For transport dost thou call on every hour,
Lorenzo? At thy friend's expense be wise:
Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;
A broken reed at best; but oft a spear:
On its sharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope expires.

Turn, hopeless thought! turn from her.—Thought
Resenting rallies, and wakes every woe. [repell'd,
Snatch'd ere thy prime! and in thy bridal hour!
And when kind Fortune, with thy lover, smil'd!
And when high-flavour'd thy fresh-opening joys!
And when blind man pronoune'd thy bliss complete!
And on a foreign shore, where strangers wept!
Strangers to thee, and, more surprising still,
Strangers to kindness, wept. Their eyes let fall
Inhuman tears; strange tears! that trickled down
From marble hearts! obdurate tenderness!
A tenderness that call'd them more severe,
In spite of Natures soft persuasion steel'd:
While Nature melted, Superstition rav'd;
That mourn'd the dead, and this denied a grave.

Their sighs incens'd; sighs foreign to the will!
Their will the tiger-suck'd outrag'd the storm;
For, oh! the curs'd ungodliness of Zeal!
While sinful flesh relented, spirit nurs'd
In blind Infallibility's embrace,
The sainted spirit petrified the breast.
Denied the charity of dust to spread
O'er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy.

What could I do? what succour? what resource?
With pious sacrilege a grave I stole;
With impious piety that grave I wrong'd;
Short in my duty, coward in my grief!
More like her murderer than friend, I crept
With soft-suspended step, and, muffled deep
In midnight darkness, whisper'd my last sigh.
I whisper'd what should echo through their realms,
Nor writher name, whose tomb should pierce the skies.
Presumptuous fear! how durst I dread her foes,
While Nature's loudest dictates I obey'd?
Pardon necessity, blest shade; of grief
And indignation rival bursts I pour'd;
Half-execration mingled with my pray'r;
Kindled at man, while I his God ador'd:
Sore grudg'd the savage land her sacred dust;
Stamp'd the curs'd soil; and with humanity
(Denied Narcissa) wish'd them all a grave.
Glows my resentment into guilt? what guilt
Can equal violations of the dead?
The dead how sacred! sacred is the dust
Of this heav'n-labour'd form, erect, divine!
This heav'n-assum'd, majestic, robe of earth
He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse
With azure bright, and cloth'd the sun in gold.
When every passion sleeps that can offend;
When strikes us every motive that can melt;
When man can wreak his rancour uncontroll'd,
That strongest curb on insult and ill-will;
Then! spleen to dust? the dust of innocence?
An angel's dust!—This Lucifer transcends;
When he contended for the patriarch's bones,
'Twas not the strife of malice, but of pride;
The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.
Far less than this is shocking in a race
Most wretched, but from streams of mutual love,
And uncreated, but for love divine;
And but for love divine this moment lost,

By Fate resorb'd, and sunk in endless night.
Man hard of heart to man! of horrid things
Most horrid! mid stupendous highly strange!
Yet oft his courtesies are smoother wrongs;
Pride brandishes the favours he confers,
And contumelious his humanity:
What then his vengeance? Hear it not, ye Stars!
And thou, pale Moon! turn paler at the sound
Man is to man the sorest, surest ill.
A previous blast foretels the rising storm;
O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall;
Volcanoes bellow ere they disembogue;
Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour;
And smoke betrays the wide-consuming fire:
Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,
And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.
Is this the flight of Fancy? would it were!
Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings, but himself,
That hideous sight, a naked human heart.

Fir'd is the Muse? and let the Muse be fir'd:
Who not inflam'd when what he speaks he feels,
And in the nerve most tender, in his friends;
Shame to mankind! Philander had his foes;
He felt the truths I sing, and I in him:
But he nor I feel more. Past ills, Narcissa!
Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart!
Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs;
Pangs numerous as the numerous ills that swarm'd
O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clustering there,
Thick as the locust on the land of Nile,
Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.
Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale)
How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd?
An aspic each, and all an hydra-woe.
What strong Herculean virtue could suffice?—
Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here?
This hoary cheek a train of tears bedews,
And each tear mourns its own distinct distress,

Each friend by Fate snatch'd from us is a plume
Pluck'd from the wing of human vanity,
Which makes us stoop from our aerial heights,
And damp'd with omen of our own decease,
On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,
Just skim earth's surface ere we break it up,
O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust,
And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends
Are angels sent on errands full of love;
For us they languish, and for us they die:
And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain?
Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hovering shades,
Which wait the revolution in our hearts?
Shall we disdain their silent, soft, address,
Their posthumous advice, and pious pray'r?
Senseless as herds that graze their hallow'd graves,
Tread under foot their agonies and groans,
Frustate their anguish, and destroy their deaths?
Lorenzo! no; the thought of death indulge;
Give it its wholesome empire! let it reign,
That kind chastiser of thy soul, in joy!
Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,
And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast.
Auspicious era! golden days, begin!
The thought of death, shall, like a god, inspire.
And why not think on death? Is life the theme
Of every thought? and wish of every hour?
And song of every joy? surprising truth!
The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange,
To wave the numerous ills that seize on life
As their own property, their lawful prey;
Ere man has measur'd half his weary stage,
His luxuries have left him no reserve,
No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights:
On cold-serv'd repetitions he subsists,
And in the tasteless present chews the past;
Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down.
Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years

Have disinherited his future hours,
Which starve on orts, and glean their former field.
Live ever here, Lorenzo!—shocking thought!
So shocking, they who wish disown it too;
Disown from shame what they from folly crave.
Live ever in the womb, nor see the light?
For what live ever here?—with labouring step
To tread our former footsteps? pace the round
Eternal? to climb life's worn, heavy wheel,
Which draws up nothing new? to beat and beat,
The beaten track? to bid each wretched day
The former mock? to surfeit on the same,
And yawn our joys? or thank a misery
For change, though sad! to see what we have seen;
Hear, till unheard, the same old slabber'd tale?
To taste the tasted, and at each return
Less tasteful? o'er our palates to decant
Another vintage; strain a flatter year
Through loaded vessels, and a laxer tone?
Crazy machines to grind earth's wasted fruits!
Ill ground, and worse concocted! load, not life!
The rational foul kennels of excess!
Still-streaming thoroughfares of dull debauch!
Trembling each gulp, lest Death should snatch the
Such of our fine ones is the wish refin'd! (bowl.
So would they have it: elegant desire!
Why not invite the bellowing stalls and wilds?
But such examples might their riot awe.
Through want of virtue, that is, want of thought,
(Though on bright thought they father all their flights)
To what are they reduc'd? to love and hate
The same vain world; to censure and espouse
This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool
Each moment of each day; to flatter bad
Through dread of worse; to cling to this rude rock,
Barren to them of good, and sharp with ills,
And hourly blacken'd with impending storms,
And infamous for wrecks of human hope—

Night III. NARCISSA. 43

Scar'd at the gloomy gulf that yawns beneath.

Such are their triumphs! such their pangs of joy!

'Tis time, high time, to shift this dismal scene,
This hugg'd, this hideous state, what art can cure?
One only, but that one what all may reach:
Virtue—she, wonder-working goddess! charms
That rock to bloom, and tames the painted shrew;
And, what will more surprise, Lorenzo! gives
To life's sick, nanseous iteration, change,
And straightens Nature's circle to a line.
Believ'st thou this, Lorenzo? lend an ear,
A patient ear, thou'l blush to disbelieve.

A languid, leaden iteration reigns,
And ever must, o'er those whose joys are joys
Of sight, smell, taste. The cuckow-seasons sing
The same dull note to such as nothing prize
But what those seasons, from the teeming earth,
To doting sense indulge: but nobler minds,
Which relish fruits unripen'd by the sun,
Make their days various, various as the dyes
On the dove's neck, which wanton in his rays.
On minds of dove-like innocence possess'd,
On lighten'd minds, that bask in virtue's beams,
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves
In that for which they long, for which they live.
Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heavenly hope,
Each rising morning sees still higher rise;
Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents
To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame;
While Nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel
Rolling beneath their elevated aims,
Makes their fair prospect fairer every hour,
Advancing virtue in a line to bliss;
Virtue, which Christian motives best inspire!
And bliss, which Christian schemes alone ensure!

And shall we then, for virtue's sake, cominece

Apostates, and turn infidels for joy?

A truth it is few doubt, but fewer trust,

' He sins against this life who slighteth the nest.'
What is this life? how few their favorite know?
Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,
By passionately loving life we make
Lov'd Life unlovely, hugging her to death.
We give to time eternity's regard,
And dreaming, take our passage for our port.
Life has no value as an end, but means;
An end deplorable! a means divine!
When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing; worse than nought;
A nest of pains; when held as nothing, much.
Like some fair humorists, life is most enjoy'd
When courted least; most worth when disesteem'd;
Then 'tis the seat of comfort, rich in peace;
In prospect richer far; important! awful!
Not to be mention'd but with shouts of praise!
Not to be thought on but with tides of joy!
The mighty basis of eternal bliss!

Where now the barren rock? the painted shrew?
Where now, Lorenzo, life's eternal round?
Have I not made my triple promise good?
Vain is the world, but only to the vain.
To what compare we then this varying scene,
Whose worth, ambiguous, rises and declines?
Waxes and wanes? (in all propitious Night
Assists me here) compare it to the moon;
Dark in herself, and indigent, but rich
In borrow'd lustre from a higher sphere.

When gross guilt interposes, labouring earth,
O'ershadow'd, mourns a deep eclipse of joy;
Her joys, at brightest, pallid to that font
Of full effulgent glory whence they flow.

Nor is that glory distant. Oh, Lorenzo!
A good man and an angel! these between
How thin the barrier? what divides their fate?
Perhaps a moment, or perhaps a year;
Or if an age, it is a moment still;
A moment, or eternity's forgot.

Then be what once they were who now are gods;
Be what Philander was, and claim the skies.
Starts timid Nature at the gloomy pass?
The soft transition call it, and be cheer'd:
Such it is often, and why not to thee?
To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise,
And may itself procure what it presumes.
Life is much flatter'd, Death is much traduc'd;
Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown.
'Strange competition!'—True, Lorenzo, strange!
So little life can cast into the scale.

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust,
Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.
Through chinks, stil'd organs, dim life peeps at light;
Death bursts th' involving cloud, and all is day:
All eye, all ear, the disembody'd power.
Death has feign'd evils nature shall not feel;
Life, ill's substantial wisdom cannot shun.
Is not the mighty mind, that sun of Heav'n!
By tyrant Life dethron'd, imprison'd, pain'd?
By Death enlarr'd, ennobled, deified?
Death but intombs the body, life the soul.

'Is Death then guiltless? How he marks his way
With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine!
Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!
With various lustres these light up the world,
Which Death puts out, and darkens human race.'
I grant, Lorenzo! this indictment just:
The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror!
Death humbles these; more barbarous Life, the man.
Life is the triumph of our mouldering clay;
Death of the spirit infinite! divine!
Death has no dread but what frail life imparts,
Nor life true joy but what kind death improves.
No bliss has life to boast, till death can give
Far greater. Life's a debtor to the grave;
Dark lattice! letting in eternal day.

Lorenzo! blush at fondness for a life

Which sends celestial souls on errands vile,
To cater for the sense, and serve at boards
Where every ranger of the wilds, perhaps
Each reptile, justly claims our upper-hand.
Luxurious feast! a soul, a soul immortal,
In all the dainties of a brute bemir'd!
Lorenzo! blush at terror for a death
Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,
Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,
And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,
And eternize, the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss.
What need I more?—O Death! the palm is thine.

Then welcome, Death! thy dreaded harbingers,
Age and disease; Disease, though long my guest,
That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life,
Which pluck'd a little more will toll the bell
That calls my few friends to my funeral;
Where feeble Nature drops, perhaps, a tear,
While Reason and Religion, better taught,
Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb
With wreath triumphant. Death is victory;
It binds in chains the raging ills of life:
Lust and Ambition, Wrath and Avarice,
Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.
That ills corrosive, cares importunate,
Are not immortal too, O Death! is thine.
Our day of dissolution!—name it right,
'Tis our great pay-day; 'tis our harvest, rich
And ripe. What though the sickle, sometimes keen,
Just scars us as we reap the golden grain;
More than thy balm, O Gilead! heals the wound.
Birth's feeble cry, and Death's deep dismal groan,
Are slender tributes low-tax'd Nature pays
For mighty gain: the gain of each a life!
But, O! the last the former so transcends,
Life dies compar'd; Life lives beyond the grave.
And feel I, Death! no joy from thought of thee?
Death! the great counsellor, who man inspires

With every nobler thought and fairer deed!
Death! the deliverer, who rescues man!
Death! the rewarder, who the rescued crowns!
Death! that absolves my birth, a curse without it!
Rich Death! that realizes all my cares,
Toils, virtues, hopes; without it a chimera!
Death! of all pain the period, not of joy;
Joy's source and subject still subsist unhurt;
One in my soul, and one in her great sire,
Though the four winds were warring for my dust.
Yes, and from winds and waves, and central night,
Though prison'd there, my dust, too, I reclaim,
(To dust when drop proud Nature's proudest spheres)
And live entire. Death is the crown of life:
Were death denied, poor man would live in vain:
Were death denied, to live would not be life:
Were death denied, ev'n fools would wish to die.
Death wounds to cure; we fall, we rise, we reign!
Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies,
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight.
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost:
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death?
When shall I die?—when shall I live for ever?

THE
Complaint.

—————
NIGHT IV.
—————

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

CONTAINING

Our only Care for the Fear of Death, and proper Sentiments of Heart on that inestimable Blessing.

Inscribed to the Honourable Mr. Yorke.

A Much-indebted Muse, O Yorke! intrudes.
Amid the smiles of fortune and of youth,
Thine ear is patient of a serious song.
How deep implanted in the breast of man
The dread of death? I sing its sovereign cure.
Why start at Death? where is he? Death arriv'd,
Is past; not come, or gone; he's never here.
Ere hope, sensation fails. Black-boding man
Receives, not suffers, Death's tremendous blow.
The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;
The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;
These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
The terrors of the living, not the dead;
Imagination's fool, and Error's wretch.
Man makes a death which Nature never made,
Then on the point of his own fancy falls,
And feels a thousand deaths in fearing one.
But were Death frightful, what has age to fear?
If prudent, age should meet the friendly foe,
And shelter in his hospitable gloom.
I scarce can meet a monument but holds

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

49

My younger ; every date cries—' Come away.'
And what recalls me? look the world around,
And tell me what. The wisest cannot tell.
Should any born of woman give his thought
Full range on just Dislike's unbounded field;
Of things the vanity, of men the flaws;
Flaws in the best; the many flaw all o'er;
As leopards spotted, or as Ethiops dark;
Vivacious ill; good dying immature;
(How immature Narcissa's marble tells)
And at its death bequeathing endless pain;
His heart, though bold, would sicken at the sight,
And spend itself in sighs for future scenes.

But grant to life (and just it is to grant
To lucky life) some perquisites of joy;
A time there is when, like a thrice-told tale,
Long-rifled life of sweet can yield no more,
But from our comment on the comedy,
Pleasing reflections on parts well-sustain'd,
Or purpos'd emendations where we fail'd,
Or hopes of plaudits from our candid Judge,
When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,
Toss Fortune back her tinsel and her plume,
And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene.

With me that time is come; my world is dead;
A new world rises, and new manners reign.
Foreign comedians, a spruce band! arrive,
To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.
What a pert race starts up! the strangers gaze,
And I at them; my neighbour is unknown;
Nor that the worst. Ah me! the dire effect
Of loitering here, of death defrauded long.
Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)
My very master knows me not.—

Shall I dare say peculiar is my fate?
I've been so long remember'd I'm forgot.
An object ever pressing dims the sight,
And hides behind its ardour to be seen.
When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint,
They drink it as the nectar of the great,

50 THE COMPLAINT. Night IV.

And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow.
Refusal! canst thou wear a smoother form?

Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme.
Who cheapens life abates the fear of death.
Twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,
Court-favour, yet untaken, I besiege;
Ambition's ill-judg'd effort to be rich.
Alas! ambition makes my little less,
Embittering the possess'd. Why wish for more?
Wishing, of all employments is the worst;
Philosophy's reverse, and health's decay!
Were I as plump as stall'd Theology,
Wishing would waste me to this shade again.
Were I as wealthy as a South-Sea dream,
Wishing is an expedient to be poor.
Wishing, that constant hectic of a fool,
Caught at a court, purg'd off by purer air
And simpler diet, gifts of rural life!

Blest be that hand divine which gently laid
My heart at rest, beneath this humble shed.
The world's a stately bark, on dangerous seas
With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril:
Here on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,
I hear the tumult of the distant throng,
As that of seas remote, or dying storms,
And meditate on scenes more silent still,
Pursue my theme, and fight the fear of death.

Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,
Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff,
Eager Ambition's fiery chase I see;
I see the circling hunt of noisy men
Burst law's inclosure, leap the mounds of right,
Pursuing and pursued, each other's prey;
As wolves for rapine, as the fox for wiles,
Till Death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?
What though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?
Earth's highest station ends in, 'Here he lies;'
And 'dust to dust' concludes her noblest song.
If this song lives, posterity shall know

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH. 51

One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,
Who thought e'en gold might come a day too late,
Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme
For future vacancies in church or state,
Some avocation deeming it—to die;
Unbit by rage canine of dying rich,
Guilt's blunder! and the loudest laugh of Hell.

O my coëvals! remnants of yourselves!
Poor human ruins tottering o'er the grave!
Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,
Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,
Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil?
Shall our pale wither'd hands be still stretch'd out,
Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age?
With avarice and convulsions, grasping hard?
Grasping at air! for what has earth beside?
Man wants but little, nor that little long:
How soon must he resign his very dust,
Which frugal Nature lent him for an hour!
Years unexperienc'd rush on numerous ills:
And soon as man, expert from time, has found
The key of life, it opes the gates of death.

When in this vale of years I backward look,
And miss such numbers, numbers too, of such
Firmer in health, and greener in their age,
And stricter on their guard, and fitter far
To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe
I still survive. And am I fond of life,
Who scarce can think it possible I live?
Alive by miracle! or, what is next,
Alive by Mead! if I am still alive,
Who long have buried what gives life to live,
Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.
Life's lee is not more shallow than impure
And vapid: Sense and Reason show the door,
Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

O thou great Arbiter of life and death!
Nature's immortal, immaterial sun!
Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth
From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay

The worm's inferior, and, in rank, beneath
The dust I tread on, high to bear my brow,
To drink the spirit of the golden day,
And triumph in existence, and couldst know
No motive but my bliss, and hast ordain'd
A rise in blessing! with the patriarch's joy
Thy call I follow to the land unknown;
I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust:
Or life or death is equal; neither weighs;
All weight in this—O let me live to thee!

Though Nature's terrors, thus, may be repress,
Still frowns grim Death; guilt points the tyrant's spear,
And whence all human guilt?—From death forgot.
Ah me! too long I set at nought the swarm
Of friendly warnings which around me flew,
And smil'd unsmitten. Small my cause to smile!
Death's admonitions, like shafts upwards shot,
More dreadful by delay, the longer ere
They strike our hearts the deeper is their wound:
O think how deep, Lorenzo! here it stings;
Who can appease its anguish? How it burns!
What hand the barb'd, envenom'd thought can draw?
What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,
And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb?

With joy,—with grief, that healing hand I see:
Ah! too conspicuous! it is fix'd on high.
On high?—what means my frenzy? I blaspheme:
Alas! how low? how far beneath the skies?
The skies it form'd, and now it bleeds for me—
But bleeds the balm I want—yet still it bleeds;
Draw the dire steel—ah, no! the dreadful blessing
What heart or can sustain or dares forego?
There hangs all human hope; that nail supports
The falling universe: that gone, we drop;
Horror receives us, and the dismal wish
Creation had been smother'd in her birth—
Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust,
When stars and sun are dust beneath his throne;
In Heav'n itself can such indulgence dwell?
O what a groan was there! a groan not his;

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH. 53

He seiz'd our dreadful right, the load sustain'd,
And heav'd the mountain from a guilty world.
A thousand worlds, so bought, were bought too dear;
Sensations new in angels' bosoms rise,
Suspend their song, and make a pause in bliss.

O for their song to reach my lofty theme!
Inspire me, Night! with all thy tuneful spheres,
Whilst I with seraphs share seraphic themes,
And show to men the dignity of man,
Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.
Shall Pagan pages glow celestial flame,
And Christian languish? On our hearts, not heads,
Falls the foul infamy. My heart! awake!
What can awake thee, unawak'd by this,
'Expended Deity on human weal?'

Feel the great truths which burst the tenfold night
Of Heathen error with a golden flood
Of endless day. To feel is to be fir'd;
And to believe, Lorenzo! is to feel.

Thou most indulgent, most tremendous Power!
Still more tremendous for thy wondrous love!
That arms with awe more awful thy commands,
And foul transgression dips in sev'nfold guilt;
How our hearts tremble at thy love immense!
In love immense, inviolably just!
Thou, rather than thy justice should be stain'd,
Didst stain the cross; und, work of wonders far
The greatest, that thy dearest far might bleed.

Bold thought! shall I dare speak it or repress?
Should man more execrate or boast theguilt (slam'd?)
Which rous'd such vengeance? which such love in-
O'er guilt (how mountainous!) with outstreach'd arms
Stern Justice and soft-smiling Love, embrace,
Supporting, in full majesty, thy throne,
When seem'd its majesty to need support,
Or that, or man, inevitably lost:
What but the fathomless of thought divine
Could labour such expedient from despair,
And rescue both? Both rescue! both exalt!
O how are both exalted by the deed!

The wondrous deed! or shall I call it more?

A wonder in Omnipotence itself!

A mystery no less to gods than men!

Not thus our infidels th' Eternal draw,
A God all-o'er consummate, absolute,
Full orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete:
They set at odds Heaven's jarring attributes,
And with one excellence another wound;
Maim Heaven's perfection, break its equal beams,
Bid mercy triumph over—God himself,
Undeified by their opprobrious praise.

A God all mercy is a God unjust.

Ye brainless wits! ye baptiz'd infidels!
Ye worse for mending! wash'd to fouler stains!
The ransom was paid down; the fund of Heav'n,
Heaven's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,
Amazing and amaz'd, pour'd forth the price,
All price beyond: though curious to compute,
Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum:
Its value vast ungrasp'd by minds create,
For ever hides and glows in the Supreme.

And was the ransom paid? it was; and paid
(What can exalt the bounty more?) for you.
The sun beheld it.—No, the shocking scene
Drove back his chariot: midnight veil'd his face;
Not such as this, not such as Nature makes;
A midnight Nature shudder'd to behold;
A midnight new! a dread eclipse (without
Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown!
Sun! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain? or start
At that enormous load of human guilt
Which bow'd his blessed head, o'erwhelm'd his cross,
Made groan the centre, burst earth's marble womb
With pangs, strange pangs! deliver'd of her dead?
Hell howl'd; and Heav'n that hour let fall a tear:
Heav'n wept, that men might smile! Heav'n bled,
Might never die!—————— [that man

And is devotion virtue? 'tis compell'd.
What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these?
Such contemplations mount us, and should mount

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

55

The mind still higher, nor ever glance on man
Unraptur'd, uninflam'd.—Where roll my thoughts
To rest from wonders? other wonders rise,
And strike where'er they roll: my soul is caught:
Heaven's sovereign blessings, clustering from the
Rush on her, in a throng, and close her round, [cross,
The prisoner of amaze!—In his blest life
I see the path, and in his death the price,
And in his great ascent the proof supreme,
Of immortality.—And did he rise?
Hear, O ye Nations! hear it, O ye Dead!
He rose! he rose! he burst the bars of death.
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates!
And give the King of glory to come in.
Who is the King of glory? he who left
His throne of glory for the pang of death.
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates!
And give the King of glory to come in.
Who is the King of glory? he who slew
The ravenous foe that gorg'd all human race!
The King of glory he, whose glory fill'd
Heav'n with amazement at his love to man,
And with divine complacency beheld
Pow'rs most illumin'd wilder'd in the theme.
The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain?
Oh, the burst gates? crush'd sting! demolish'd throne!
Last gasp of vanquish'd Death. Shout, earth and Heav'n,
This sum of good to man! whose nature then
Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb.
Then, then, I rose; then first Humanity
Triumphant past the crystal ports of light,
(Stupendous guest!) and seiz'd eternal youth,
Seiz'd in our name. E'er since 'tis blasphemous
To call man mortal. Man's mortality
Was then transferr'd to death; and Heaven's duration
Unaliensably seal'd to this frail frame,
This child of dust.—Man, all-immortal! hail;
Hail, Heav'n! all lavish of strange gifts to man!
Thine all the glory, man's the boundless bliss.
Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

57

More fragrant than Arabia sacrific'd,
And all her spicy mountains in a flame.
So dear, so due to Heav'n, shall Praise descend
With her soft plume (from plausive angels' wing
First pluck'd by man) to tickle mortal ears,
Thus diving in the pockets of the great:
Is praise the perquisite of every paw,
Though black as hell, that grapples well for gold?
Oh love of gold! thou meanest of amours!
Shall praise her odours waste on virtues dead,
Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,
Earn dirty bread by washing Ethiops fair,
Removing filth, or sinking it from sight,
A scavenger in scenes where vacant posts,
Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect
Their future ornaments? From courts and thrones
Return, apostate Praise! thou vagabond!
Thou prostitute! to thy first love return,
Thy first, thy greatest, once unrivall'd theme.

There flow redundant, like Meander flow,
Back to the fountain, to that parent Pow'r
Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,
The soul to be. Men homage pay to men,
Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow,
In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,
Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on thee,
Great Sire! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing,
To prostrate angels an amazing scene!
O the presumption of man's awe for man!—
Man's Author! End! Restorer! Law! and Judge!
Thine all! Day thine, and thine this gloom of Night,
With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds.
What night eternal but a frown from thee?
What Heaven's meridian glory but thy smile?
And shall not praise be thine, not human praise,
While Heaven's high host on hallelujahs live?

O may I breathe no longer than I breathe
My soul in praise to him who gave my soul;
And all her infinite of prospect fair,
Cut through the shades of hell, great Love! by thee,

Who struck it? Who?—O how is man enlarg'd,
Seen through this medium! How the pigmy tow'rs!
How counterpois'd his origin from dust!
How counterpois'd to dust his sad return!
How voided his vast distance from the skies!
How near he presses on the seraph's wing!
Which is the seraph? which the born of clay?
How this demonstrates, through the thickest cloud
Of guilt and clay condens'd, the son of Heav'n!
The double son; the made, and the re-made!
And shall Heaven's double property be lost?
Man's double madness only can destroy.
To man the bleeding Cross has promis'd all;
The bleeding Cross has sworn eternal grace.
Who gave his life, what grace shall be deny?
O Ye! who from this rock of ages leap
Apostates, plunging headlong in the deep!
What cordial joy, what consolation strong,
Whatever winds arise, or billows roll!
Our interest in the Master of the storm:
Cling there, and in wreck'd Nature's ruins smile,
While vile apostates tremble in a calm.
Man! know thyself: all wisdom centres there.
To none man seems ignoble but to man.
Angels that grandeur men o'erlook, admire:
How long shall human nature be their book,
Degenerate mortal! and unread by thee?
The beam dim reason sheds shows wonders there:
What high contents! illustrious faculties!
But the grand comment, which displays at full
Our human height, scarce sever'd from divine,
By Heaven compos'd, was publish'd on the cross.
Who looks on that, and sees not in himself
An awful stranger, a terrestrial god?
A glorious partner with the Deity
In that high attribute, immortal life?
If a God bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm.
I gaze, and as I gaze my mounting soul
Catches strange fire, Eternity! at thee,
And drops the world—or, rather, more enjoyr.*

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH. 61

chang'd the face of Nature! how improv'd!
seem'd a chaos shines a glorious world,
hat a world an Eden; heighten'd all!
another scene! another self!
still another, as time rolls along,
that a self far more illustrious still.
nd long ages, yet roll'd up in shades
erc'd by bold Conjecture's keenest ray,
evolutions of surprising Fate!
Nature opens, and receives my soul
undless walks of raptur'd thought! where gods
unter and embrace me! What new births
range adventure, foreign to the sun,
e what now charms, perhaps whate'er exists,
time, and fair creation, are forgot!
this extravagant? of man we form
avagant conception to be just:
ception unconfin'd wants wings to reach him;
nd its reach the Godhead only more.
he great Father! kindled at one flame
world of rationals; one spirit pour'd
spirits' awful Fountain; pour'd himself
ugh all their souls, but not in equal stream,
use, or frugal, of th' inspiring God,
is wise plan demanded; and when past
r various trials, in their various spheres,
ey continue rational, as made,
rbs them all into himself again,
throne their centre, and his smile their crown.
y doubt we then, the glorious truth to sing,
gh yet unsung, as deem'd, perhaps, too bold?
ls are men of a superior kind;
ls are men in lighter habit clad,
o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight;
men are angels, loaded for an hour,
wade this miry vale, and climb with pain,
slippery step, the bottom of the steep.
ls their failings, mortals have their praise:
e here, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd,
summon'd to the glorious standard soon,

Which flames eternal crimson through the skies.
Nor are our brothers thoughtless of their kin,
Yet absent; but not absent from their love.
Michael has fought our battles; Raphael sung
Our triumphs; Gabriel on our errands flown,
Sent by the Sovereign: and are these, O Man!
Thy friends, thy warm allies? and thou (shame burn
The cheek to cinder!) rival to the brute?

Religion's all. Descending from the skies
To wretched man, the goddess in her left
Holds out this world, and in her right the next.
Religion! the sole voucher man is man;
Supporter sole of man above himself;
Ev'n in this night of frailty, change, and death,
She gives the soul a soul that acts a god.
Religion! Providence! an after-state!
Here is firm footing; here is solid rock;
This can support us; all is sea besides;
Sinks under us; bestorms, and then devours.
His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

As when a wretch, from thick polluted air,
Darkness and stench, and suffocating damps,
And dungeon horrors, by kind Fate discharg'd,
Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure
Surrounds him, and Elysian prospects rise.
His heart exults, his spirits cast their load,
As if new-born he triumphs in the change;
So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims
And sordid sweets, from feculence and froth
Of ties terrestrial set at large, she mounts
To Reason's region, her own element,
Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

Religion! thou the soul of happiness,
And, groaning Calvary! of thee: there shine
The noblest truths; there strongest motives sting;
There sacred violence assaults the soul;
There nothing but compulsion is forborne.
Can love allure us? or can terror awe?
He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the sun.—

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH. 63

He sighs!—the aigh earth's deep foundation shakes,
If in his love so terrible, what then
His wrath inflam'd? his tenderness on fire?
Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires?
Can pray'r, can praise, avert it?—Thou, my all!
My theme! my inspiration! and my crown!
My strength in age! my rise in low estate!
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth!—my world!
My light in darkness! and my life in death!
My boast through time! bliss through eternity!
Eternity, too short to speak thy praise,
Or fathom thy profound of love to man!
To man of men the meanest, ev'n to me;
My sacrifice! my God!—what things are these!

What then art Thou? by what name shall I call thee?
Knew I the name devout archangels use,
Devout archangels should the name enjoy,
By me unrivall'd; thousands more sublime,
None half so dear as that which, though unspoke,
Still glows at heart. O how Omnipotencœ
Is lost in love! thou great Philanthropist!
Father of angels! but the friend of man!
Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born!
Thou who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand
From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood!
How art thou pleas'd by bounty to distress!
To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
Too big for birth! to favour and confound;
To challenge, and to distance all return!
Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,
And leave Praise panting in the distant vale!
Thy right, too great, defrauds thee of thy due;
And sacrilegious our sublimest song.
But since the naked will obtains thy smile,
Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,
And future life symphonious to my strain,
(That noblest hymn to Heav'n!) for ever lie
Intomb'd my fear of death! and every fear,
The dread of every evil, but thy frown.

D

64 THE COMPLAINT. Night IV.

Whom see I yonder so demurely smile?
Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.
Ye Quietists! in homage to the skies!
Serene! of soft address! who mildly make
An unobtrusive tender of your hearts,
Abhorring violence! who halt indeed,
But, for the blessing, wrestle not with Heav'n!
Think you my song too turbulent? too warm?
Are passions, then, the pagans of the soul?
Reason alone baptiz'd? alone ordain'd
To touch things sacred? Oh for warmer still!
Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my pow'rs:
Oh for an humbler heart and prouder song!
Thou, my much-injur'd Theme! with that soft eye
Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look
Compassion to the coldness of my breast,
And pardon to the winter in my strain.

On ye cold-hearted, frozen, Formalists!
On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm:
Passion is reason, transport temper here.
Shall Heav'n, which gave us ardour, and has shewn
Her own for man so strongly, not disdain
What smooth emollients in theology,
Recumbent Virtue's downy doctors, preach,
That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise?
Rise odours sweet from incense uninflam'd?
Devotion when lukewarm is undevout;
But when it glows, its heat is struck to Heav'n;
To human hearts her golden harps are strung;
High Heaven's orchestra chaunts amen to man.

Hear I, or dream I bear their distant strain,
Sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of Heav'n,
Soft-waisted on celestial Pity's plume,
Through the vast spaces of the universe,
To cheer me in this melancholy gloom?
Oh when will death (now stingless) like a friend
Admit me of their choir? Oh when will death
This mouldering, old, partition-wall throw down?
Give beings, one in nature, one abode?
Oh Death divine! that giv'st us to the skies:

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

65

Great future! glorious patron of the past
And present! when shall I thy shrine adore?
From Nature's continent, immensely wide,
Immensely blest, this little isle of life,
This dark incarcerating colony
Divides us. Happy day that breaks our chain!
That manumits; that calls from exile home;
That leads to Nature's great metropolis,
And re-admits us, through the guardian band
Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne,
Who hears our Advocate, and, through his wounds
Beholding man, allows that tender name.
'Tis this makes Christian triumph a command;
'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wise.
'Tis impious in a good man to be sad.

Seest thou, Lorenzo, where hangs all our hope?
Touch'd by the cross we live, or more than die;
That touch which touch'd not angels; more divine
Than that which touch'd confusion into form,
And darkness into glory: partial touch!
Ineffably pre-eminent regard!
Sacred to man, and sovereign through the whole
Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs
From Heav'n through all duration, and supports,
In one illustrious and amazing plan,
Thy welfare, Nature! and thy God's renown.
That touch, with charm celestial, heals the soul
Diseas'd, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,
Turns earth to Heav'n, to heav'nly thrones transforms
The ghastly ruins of the mouldering tomb.

Dost ask me when? When he who died returns;
Returns, how chang'd! where then the man of woe?
In Glory's terrors all the Godhead burns,
And all his courts, exhausted by the tide
Of deities triumphant in his train,
Leave a stupendous solitude in Heaven;
Replenish'd soon, replenish'd with increase
Of pomp and multitude; a radiant band
Of angels new, of angels from the tomb.

Is this by fancy thrown remote? and rise

Dark doubts between the promise and event?
I send thee not to volumes for thy cure;
Read Nature; Nature is a friend to truth;
Nature is Christian; preaches to mankind,
And bids dead matter aid us in our creed.
Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight?
Th' illustrious stranger passing, terror sheds
On gazing nations from his fiery train,
Of length enormous, takes his ample round
Through depths of ether; coasts unnumber'd worlds
Of more than solar glory; doubles wide
Heaven's mighty cape; and then revisits earth,
From the long travel of a thousand years.
Thus at the destin'd period shall return
He, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze,
And with him all our triumph o'er the tomb.

Nature is dumb on this important point,
Or Hope precarious in low whisper breathes;
Faith speaks aloud, distinct; ev'n adders hear,
But turn, and dart into the dark again.
Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of death,
To break the shock blind Nature cannot shun,
And lands Thought smoothly on the farther shore.
Death's terror is the mountain faith removes,
That mountain-barrier between man and peace.
'Tis faith disarms Destruction, and absolves
From every clamorous charge the guiltless tomb.

Why disbelieve? Lorenzo!—' Reason bids,
All sacred Reason.'—Hold her sacred still;
Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame:
All-sacred Reason! source and soul of all
Demanding praise on earth, or earth above!
My heart is thine: deep in its inmost folds
Live thou with life; live dearer of the two;
Wear I the blessed cross, by Fortune stamp'd
On passive Nature before Thought was born?
My birth's blind bigot! fir'd with local zeal!
No; Reason rebaptiz'd me when adult;
Weigh'd true and false in her impartial scale;
My heart became the convert of my head,

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH. 67

And made that choice which once was but my fate.
'On argument alone my faith is built.'
Reason pursued is Faith; and unpursued,
Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more:
And such our proof, that or our Faith is right,
Or Reason lies, and Heav'n design'd it wrong,
Absolve we this? what then is blasphemy?

Fond as we are, and justly fond of faith,
Reason, we grant, demands our first regard;
The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear.
Reason the root, fair Faith is but the flower:
The fading flower shall die, but Reason lives
Immortal, as her Father in the skies.
When faith is virtue, reason makes it so.
Wrong not the Christian; think not reason yours;
'Tis reason our great Master holds so dear;
'Tis reason's injur'd rights his wrath resents;
'Tis reason's voice obey'd his glories crown:
To give lost reason life he pour'd his own.
Believe, and show the reason of a man;
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a god;
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.
Through reason's wounds alone thy faith can die,
Which dying, tenfold terror gives to Death,
And dips in venom his twice-mortal sting.

Learn hence what honours, what loud psalms, due
To those who push our antidote aside;
Those boasted friends to reason and to man,
Whose fatal love stabs every joy, and leaves
Death's terror heighten'd, gnawing on his heart.
These pompous sons of reason idoliz'd,
And vilified at once; of reason dead,
Then deified, as monarchs were of old;
What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow?
While love of truth through all their camp resounds,
They draw Pride's curtain o'er the noon-tide ray,
Spike up their inch of reason on the point
Of philosophic wit, call'd Argument,
And then exulting in their taper, cry,
'Behold the sun;' and, Indian-like, adore,

Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!

Thou Maker of new morals to mankind!

The grand morality is love of thee.

As wise as Socrates, if such they were,

(Nor will they bate of that sublime renown)

As wise as Socrates might justly stand

The definition of a modern fool.

A Christian is the highest style of man.

And is there who the blessed cross wipes off,

As a foul blot, from his dishonour'd brow?

If angels tremble, 'tis at such a sight:

The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,

More struck with grief or wonder who can tell?

Ye sold to sense! ye citizens of earth!

(For such alone the Christian banner fly)

Know ye how wise your choice, how great your gain?

Behold the picture of earth's happiest man:

' He calls his wish, it comes; he sends it back,

And says he call'd another; that arrives,

Meets the same welcome; yet he still calls on;

Till one calls him, who varies not his call,

But holds him fast in chains of darkness bound,

Till Nature dies, and Judgment sets him free;

A freedom far less welcome than his chain.'

But grant man happy; grant him happy long;

Add to life's highest prize her latest hour;

That hour, so late, is nimble in approach,

That, like a post, comes on in full career.

How swift the shuttle flies that weaves thy shroud!

Where is the fable of thy former years?

Thrown down the gulf of time; as far from thee

As they had ne'er been thine; the day in hand,

Like a bird struggling to get loose, is going;

Scarce now possess'd, so suddenly 'tis gone;

And each swift moment fled, is death advanc'd

By strides as swift. Eternity is all;

And whose eternity? who triumphs there?

Bathing for ever in the font of bliss!

For ever basking in the Deity!

Lorenzo! who!—thy conscience shall reply.

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH. 69

give it leave to speak; "twill speak ere long,
y leave unsask'd. Lofenzo! hear it now,
nile useful its advice, its accent mild.
the great edict, the divine decree,
uth is deposited with man's last hour;
n honest hour, and faithful to her trust;
ruth! eldest daughter of the Deity;
ruth! of his council when he made the worlds;
or less, when he shall judge the worlds he made;
hough silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound,
nother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys,
hat heaven-commission'd hour no sooner calls,
ut from her cavern in the soul's abyss,
ike him they fable under Ætna whelm'd,
he goddess bursts in thunder and in flame,
oudly convinces, and severely pains.
ark demons I discharge, and hydra-stings;
he keen vibration of bright truth—is hell;
ist definition! though by schools untaught.
e deaf to truth! peruse this parson'd page,
nd trust, for once, a prophet and a priest;—
Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die.'

THE
Complaint.

NIGHT V.

THE RELAPSE.

Inscribed to the Right Hon. the Earl of Litchfield.

L ORENZO! to reccriminate is just.
Fondness for fame is avarice of air.

I grant the man is vain who writes for praise :
Praise no man e'er deserv'd, who sought no more.

As just thy second charge. I grant the Muse

Has often blush'd at her degenerate sons,

Retain'd by sense to plead her filthy cause,

To raise the low, to magnify the mean,

And subtilize the gross into refin'd;

As if to magic numbers' powerful charm

'Twas given to make a civet of their song

Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.

Wit, a true pagan, deifies the brute,

And lifts our swine-enjoyments from the mire.

The fact notorious, nor obscure the cause.

We wear the chains of pleasure and of pride :

These share the man, and these distract him too ;

Draw different ways, and clash in their commands.

Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars ;

But Pleasure, lark-like, nests upon the ground.

Joys shar'd by brute-creation Pride resents ;

Pleasure embraces : man would both enjoy,

And both at once : a point how hard to gain !

But what can't Wit, when stung by strong desire ?

Wit dares attempt this arduous enterprise.

Since joys of sense can't rise to Reason's taste,

Night V. THE RELAPSE. 71

In subtle Sophistry's laborious forge
Wit hammers out a reason new, that stoops
To sordid scenes, and meets them with applause.
Wit calls the Graces the chaste zone to loose,
Nor less than a plump god to fill the bowl:
A thousand phantoms and a thousand spells,
A thousand opiates scatters to delude,
To fascinate, inebriate, lay asleep,
And the fool'd mind delightfully confound.
Thus that which shock'd the judgments shocks no more;
That which gave Pride offence, no more offends.
Pleasure and Pride, by nature mortal foes,
At war eternal, which in man shall reign,
By Wit's address patch up a fatal peace,
And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch,
From rank refin'd to delicate and gay,
Art, cursed Art! wipes off th' indebted blush
From Nature's cheek, and bronzes every shame.
Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt,
And infamy stands candidate for praise.

All writ by man in favour of the soul,
These sensual ethics far, in bulk, transcend.
The flowers of eloquence, profusely pour'd
O'er spotted Vice, fill half the letter'd world.
Can pow'rs of genius exorcise their page,
And consecrate enormities with song?

But let not these inexpiable strains
Condemn the Muse that knows her dignity,
Nor meanly stops at time, but holds the world
As 'tis, in Nature's ample field, a point,
A point in her esteem, from whence to start,
And run the round of universal space,
To visit being universal there,
And being's Source, that utmost flight of mind!
Yet spite of this so vast circumference,
Well knows but what is moral nought is great.
Sing syrens only? do not angels sing?
There is in Poësy a decent pride,

D 2

Which well becomes her when she speaks to Prose,
Her younger sister, haply not more wise.

Think'st thou, Lorenzo, to find pastimes here?
No guilty passion blown into a flame,
No foible flatter'd, dignity disgrac'd,
No fairy field of fiction, all on flow'r,
No rainbow colours here, or silken tale;
But solemn counsels, images of awe,
Truths which Eternity lets fall on men,
With double weight, through these revolving spheres,
This death-deep silence, and incumbent shade:
Thoughts such as shall revisit your last hour,
Visit uncall'd, and live when life expires;
And thy dark pencil, Midnight! darker still
In melancholy dipp'd, imbrowns the whole.

Yet this, ev'n this, my laughter-loving friends!
Lorenzo! and thy brothers of the smile!
If what imports you most can most engage,
Shall steal your ear, and chain you to my song.
Or if you fail me, know the wise shall taste
The truths I sing; the truths I sing shall feel;
And, feeling, give assent; and their assent
Is ample recompence; is more than praise.
But chiefly thine, O Litchfield! nor mistake;
Think not unintroduc'd I force my way:
Narcissa, not unknown, not unallied
By virtue, or by blood, illustrious youth!
To thee, from blooming amaranthine bow'rs,
Where all the language harmony, descends
Uncall'd, and asks admittance for the Muse;
A Muse that will not pain thee with thy praise;
Thy praise she drops, by nobler still inspir'd.

O thou, bless'd Spirit! whether the Supremie,
Great antemundane Father! in whose breast
Embryo creation, unborn being, dwelt,
And all its various revolutions roll'd
Present, though future, prior to themselves;
Whose breath can blow it into nought again,
Or from his throne some delegated pow'r,

Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the thought
From vain and vile to solid and sublime!
Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts
Of inspiration, from a purer stream,
And fuller of the God, than that which burst
From fam'd Castalia; nor is yet allay'd
My sacred thirst, though long my soul has rang'd
Through pleasing paths of moral and divine,
By thee sustain'd, and lighted by the stars.

By them best lighted are the paths of thought;
Nights are their days, their most-illumin'd hours.
By day the soul, o'erborne by life's career,
Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,
Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng.
By day the soul is passive, all her thoughts
Impos'd, precarious, broken, ere mature.
By night, from objects free, from passion cool,
Thoughts uncontroll'd, and unimpress'd, the births
Of pure election, arbitrary range,
Not to the limits of one world confin'd,
But from ethereal travels light on earth
As voyagers drop anchor for repose.

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond
Of feather'd fopperies, the sun adore;
Darkness has more divinity for me;
It strikes thought inward; it drives back the soul
To settle on herself, our point supreme!
There lies our theatre; there sits our judge.
Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene;
'Tis the kind hand of Providence stretch'd out
'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis Reason's reign,
And Virtue's too; these tutelary shades
Are man's asylum from the tainted throng.
Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too;
It no less rescues virtue than inspires,
Virtue, for ever frail as fair below.
Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,
Nor touches on the world without a stain.
The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,
Immaculate, the manners of the morn.

Something we thought is blotted; we resolv'd,
Is shaken; we renounc'd, returns again.
Each salutation may slide in a sin
Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.
Nor is it strange; light, motion, concourse, noise,
All scatter us abroad. Thought, outward-bound,
Neglectful of our home-affairs, flies off
In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,
And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

Present example gets within our guard,
And acts with double force, by few repell'd.
Ambition fires ambition; love of gain
Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast:
Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours breathe,
And inhumanity is caught from man,
From smiling man! A slight, a single glance,
And shot at random, often has brought home
A sudden fever to the throbbing heart
Of envy, rancour, or impure desire.
We see, we hear, with peril; Safety dwells
Remote from multitude. The world's a school
Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around!
We must or imitate or disapprove;
Must list as their accomplices or foes:
That stains our innocence, this wounds our peace.
From Nature's birth, hence, Wisdom has been smit
With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade,

This sacred shade and solitude what is it?
'Tis the felt presence of the Deity.
Few are the faults we flatter when alone;
Vice sinks in her allurements, is unguilt,
And looks, like other objects, black by night.
By night an atheist half believes a God.

Night is fair Virtue's immemorial friend.
The conscious Moon, through every distant age,
Has held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall,
On Contemplation's eye, her purging ray.
The fam'd Athenian, he who woud from Heav'n
Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,
And form their manners, not inflame their pride,

While o'er his head, as fearful to molest
 His labouring mind, the stars in silence slide,
 And seem all gazing on their future guest,
 See him soliciting his ardent suit
 In private audience: all the live-long night,
 Rigid in thought, and motionless, he stands,
 Nor quits his theme or posture till the sun
 (Rude drunkard! rising rosy from the main)
 Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,
 And gives him to the tumult of the world.
 Hail, precious moments! stol'n from the black waste
 Of murder'd time! auspicious Midnight! hail!
 The world excluded, every passion hush'd,
 And open'd a calm intercourse with Heav'n,
 Here the soul sits in council, ponders past,
 Predestines future action; sees, not feels
 Tumultuous life, and reasons with the storm,
 All her lies answers, and thinks down her charms.

What awful joy! what mental liberty!
 I am not pent in darkness; rather say
 (If not too bold) in darkness I'm imbower'd.
 Delightful gloom! the clustering thoughts around
 Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade,
 But droop by day, and sicken in the sun.
 Thought borrows light elsewhere; from that first fire,
 Fountain of animation! whence descends
 Urania, my celestial guest! who deigns
 Nightly to visit me, so mean; and now,
 Conscious how needful discipline to man,
 From pleasing dalliance with the charms of Night,
 My wandering thought recals, to what excites
 Far other beat of heart, Narcissa's tomb.

Or is it feeble Nature calls me back,
 And breaks my spirit into grief again?
 Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood?
 A cold slow puddle creeping through my veins?
 Or is it thus with all men?—Thus with all.
 What are we? how unequal! now we soar,
 And now we sink. To be the same transcends
 Our present prowess. Dearly pays the soul

And banish peace till nobler guests arrive,
And bring it back a true and endless peace?
Calamities are friends; and glaring day
Of these unnumber'd lustres robs our sight,
Prosperity puts out unnumber'd thoughts
Of import high, and light divine to man.

The man how bless'd, who, sick of gaudy scenes,
(Scenes apt to thrust between us and ourselves!)
Is led by choice to take his favorite walk
Beneath Death's gloomy, silent, cypress shades,
Unpierc'd by Vanity's fantastic ray;
To read his monuments, to weigh his dust,
Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs!
Lorenzo! read with me Narcissa's stone;
(Narcissa was thy favourite) let us read
Her moral stone; few doctors preach so well;
Few orators so tenderly can touch
The feeling heart. What pathos in the date!
Apt words can strike; and yet in them we see
Faint images of what we here enjoy.
What cause have we to build on length of life?
Temptations seize when fear is laid asleep,
And ill foreboded is our strongest guard.

See from her tomb, as from an humble shrine,
Truth, radiant goddess! sallies on my soul,
And puts Delusion's dusky train to flight;
Dispels the mist our sultry passions raise,
From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene,
And shows the real estimate of things,
Which no man, unafflicted, ever saw;
Pulls off the veil from Virtue's rising charms;
Detects temptation in a thousand lies.
Truth bids me look on men as autumn-leaves,
And all they bleed for as the summer's dust
Driv'n by the whirlwind; lighted by her beams,
I widen my horizon, gain new powers,
See things invisible, feel things remote,
Am present with futurities; think nought
To man so foreign as the joys possess'd,
Nought so much his as those beyond the grave.

No folly keeps its colour in her sight;
 Pale worldly Wisdom loses all her charms.
 In pompous promise from her schemes profound,
 If future fate she plans, 'tis all in leaves,
 Like sybil, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss!
 At the first blast it vanishes in air.
 Not so celestial. Wouldst thou know, Lorenzo!
 How differ worldly wisdom and divine?
 Just as the waning and the waxing moon.
 More empty worldly wisdom every day,
 And every day more fair her rival shines.
 When later, there's less time to play the fool.
 Soon our whole term for Wisdom is expir'd,
 (Thou know'st she calls no council in the grave)
 And everlasting fool is writ in fire,
 Or real wisdom wafts us to the skies.

As worldly schemes resemble sybils' leaves,
 The good man's days to sybils' books compare,
 (In ancient story read, thou know'st the tale)
 In price still rising as in number lies,
 Inestimable quite his final hour.
 For that who thrones can offer, offer thrones;
 Insolvent worlds the purchase cannot pay.
 'Oh let me die his death!'—all nature cries.
 'Then live his life.'—All Nature falters there;
 Our great physician daily to consult,
 To commune with the grave our only cure.

What grave prescribes the best?—A friend's; and yet
 From a friend's grave how soon we disengage!
 Ev'n to the dearest, as his marble, cold.
 Why are friends ravish'd from us? 'tis to bind,
 By soft Affection's ties, on human hearts
 The thought of death, which reason, too supine,
 Or misemploy'd, so rarely fastens there.
 Nor reason nor affection, no, nor both
 Combin'd, can break the witchcrafts of the world.
 Behold th' inexorable hour at hand;
 Behold th' inexorable hour forgot!
 And to forget it the chief aim of life,
 Though well to ponder it is life's chief end.

Is death, that ever-threatening, ne'er remote,
That all-important, and that only sure,
(Come when he will) an unexpected guest?
Nay, though invited by the loudest calls
Of blind Imprudence, unexpected still,
Though numerous messengers are sent before,
To warn his great arrival? What the cause,
The wondrous cause, of this mysterious ill?
All Heav'n looks down astonish'd at the sight.

Is it that Life has sown her joys so thick,
We can't thrust in a single care between?
Is it that Life has such a swarm of cares,
The thought of death can't enter for the throng?
Is it that Time steals on with downy feet,
Nor wakes Indulgence from her golden dream?
To day is so like yesterday, it cheats;
We take the lying sister for the same.
Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a brook,
For ever changing, unperceiv'd the change.
In the same brook none ever bath'd him twice;
To the same life none ever twice awoke.
We call the brook the same; the same we think
Our life, though still more rapid in its flow,
Nor mark the much irrevocably laps'd,
And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say
(Retaining still the brook to bear us on)
That life is like a vessel on the stream?
In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide
Of time descend, but not on time intent;
Amus'd, unconscious of the gliding wave,
Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;
We start, awake, look out: what see we there?—
Our brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.

Is this the cause death flies all human thought?
Or is it judgment, by the Will struck blind,
That domineering mistress of the soul!
Like him so strong by Dalilah the fair?
Or is it fear turns startled Reason back,
From looking down a precipice so steep?
'Tis dreadful; and the dread is wisely plac'd

THE RELAPSE.

81

re, conscious of the make of man,
ful friend it is, a terror kind,
g sword to guard the tree of Life.
unaw'd, in life's most smiling hour
id man would repine; would suffer joys,
rn impatient for his promis'd skies.
d, on each punctilious pique of pride,
on of humour, would give rage the rein,
o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,
ar the scenes of Providence below.
t groan was that, Lorenzo?—Furies! rise,
rown in your less execrable yell,
nia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,
ng impetuous, a black sullen soul,
d from hell, with horrid lust of death.
iend, the brave, the gallant Altamont,
I'd, so thought—and then he fled the field;
ase the fear of death than fear of life.
tain! infamous for suicide!
and in thy manners! far disjoin'd
the whole world of rationals beside!
bient waves plunge thy polluted head,
the dire stain, nor shock the continent.
thou be shock'd while I detect the cause
f-assault, expose the monster's birth,
id Abhorrence hiss it round the world.
i not thy clime, nor chide the distant sun;
un is innocent, thy clime absolv'd.
ral climes kind Nature never made.
ause I sing in Eden might prevail,
roves it is thy folly, not thy fate.
soul of man, (let man in homage bow
names his soul) a native of the skies!
orn and free, her freedom should maintain,
d, unmortgag'd for earth's little bribes.
intrinsic stranger, in this foreign land,
trangers, jealous of her dignity,
us of home, and ardent to return,
th suspicious, earth's enchanted cup
cool reserv'd light touching, should indulge.

On immortality, her godlike taste;
There take large draughts; make her chief banqu
But some reject this sustenance divine, [the]
To beggarly vile appetites descend,
Ask alms of earth for guests that came from Heav'
Sink into slaves, and sell, for present hire,
Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate)
Their native freedom, to the prince who sways
This nether world: and when his payments fail,
When his foul basket gorges them no more,
Or their pall'd palates loath the basket full,
Are instantly, with wild demoniac rage,
For breaking all the chains of Providence,
And bursting their confinement, though fast bars
By laws divine and human, guarded strong
With horrors doubled to defend the pass,
The blackest Nature or dire guilt can raise,
And moated round with fathomless destruction,
Sure to receive andwhelm them in their fall.

Such, Britons! is the cause, to you unknown,
Or, worse, o'erlook'd; o'erlook'd by magistrates,
Thus criminals themselves. I grant the deed
Is madness, but the madness of the heart.
And what is that? our utmost bound of guilt.
A sensual unreflecting life is big
With monstrous births, and suicide, to crown
The black infernal brood. The bold to break
Heaven's law supreme, and desperately rush
Through sacred Nature's murder, on their own,
Because they never think of death, they die.
'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,
At once to shun and meditate his end.
When by the bed of languishment we sit,
(The seat of Wisdom! if our choice, not fate)
Or o'er our dying friends in anguish hang,
Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head,
Number their moments, and in every clock
Start at the voice of an eternity;
See the dim lamp of life just feebly lift
An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,

While liquid pearl runs trickling down their cheek
Of her's not prouder Egypt's wanton queen,
Carousing gems, herself dissolv'd in love.
Some weep at death, abstracted from the dead,
And celebrate, like Charles, their own decease.
By kind construction some are deem'd to weep,
Because a decent veil conceals their joy.
Some weep in earnest, and yet weep in vain,
As deep in indiscretion as in woe.
Passion, blind passion! impotently pours
Tears that deserve more tears, while Reason sleep
Or gazes, like an idiot, unconcern'd,
Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm;
Knows not it speaks to her, and her alone.
Irrationals all sorrow are beneath,
That noble gift! that privilege of man!
From sorrow's pang, the birth of endless joy:
But these are barren of that birth divine;
They weep impetuous as the summer-storm,
And full as short! the cruel grief soon tam'd,
They make a pastime of the stingless tale;
Far as the deep-resounding knell they spread
The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more:
No grain of wisdom pays them for their woe.

Half round the globe the tears pump'd up by dea
Are spent in watering vanities of life;
In making folly flourish still more fair.
When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,
Reclines on earth and sorrows in the dust,
Instead of learning there her true support,
Though there thrown down her true support to leav
Without Heaven's aid, impatient to be blest,
She crawls to the next shrub or bramble vile,
Though from the stately cedar's arms she fell;
With stale foresworn embraces clings anew,
The stranger weds, and blossoms, as before,
In all the fruitless fopperies of life,
Presents her weed, well-fancied at the ball,
And raffles for the death's-head on the ring.
So wept Aurelia, till the destin'd youth

Stept in with his receipt for making smiles,
And blanching sables into bridal bloom,
So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate,
Who gave that angel-boy on whom he dotes,
And died to give him, orphan'd in his birth!
Not such, Narcissa! my distress for thee.
I'll make an altar of thy sacred tomb,
To sacrifice to Wisdom.—What wast thou?
' Young, gay, and fortunate!' Each yields a theme:
I'll dwell on each, to shun thought more severe;
(Heav'n knows I labour with severer still!)
I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death.
A soul without reflection, like a pile
Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.

And, first, thy youth : what says it to grey hairs?
Narcissa! I'm become thy pupil now—
Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning dew,
She sparkled, was exhal'd, and went to Heav'n.
Time on this head has snow'd, yet still 'tis borne
Aloft, nor thinks but on another's grave.
Cover'd with shame I speak it, age severe
Old worn-out vice sets down for virtue fair;
With graceless gravity chastising youth,
That youth chas'tis'd surpassing in a fault.
Father of all, forgetfulness of death;
As if, like objects pressing on the sight,
Death had advanc'd too near us to be seen;
Or that life's loan time ripen'd into right,
And men might plead prescription from the grave,
Deathless, from repetition of reprieve.
Deathless? far from it! such are dead already;
Their hearts are buried, and the world their grave.

Tell me, some god! my guardian angel! tell
What thus infatuates? what enchantment plants
The phantom of an age 'twixt us and Death,
Already at the door? He knocks; we hear him,
And yet we will not hear. What mail defends
Our touch'd hearts? what miracle turns off
The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers
Is daily darted, and is daily shunn'd?

We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs
Around us falling, wounded oft ourselves,
Though bleeding with our wounds, immortal still.
We see Time's furrows on another's brow,
And Death intrench'd, preparing his assault:
How few themselves in that just mirror see!
Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong!
There death is certain; doubtful here: he must,
And soon: we may, within an age, expire. [green
Though grey our heads, our thoughts and aims are
Like damag'd clocks, whose hand and bell dissent.
Folly sings six, while Nature points at twelve.

Absurd longevity! more, more, it cries:
More life, more wealth, more trash of every kind.
And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails?
Object and appetite must club for joy:
Shall Folly labour hard to mend the bow,
Bawbles, I mean, that strike us from without,
While Nature is relaxing every string!
Ask Thought for joy; grow rich, and hoard within.
Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease,
Has nothing of more manly to succeed?
Contract the taste immortal; learn e'en now
To relish what alone subsists hereafter.
Divine, or none, henceforth your joys for ever.
Of age, the glory is to wish to die:
That wish is praise and promise; it applauds
Past life, and promises our future bliss.
What weakness see not children in their sires!
Grand-climacterical absurdities!
Grey-hair'd authority, to faults of youth
How shocking! it makes folly thrice a fool;
And our first childhood might our last despise.
Peace and esteem is all that age can hope:
Nothing but wisdom gives the first; the last
Nothing but the repute of being wise.
Folly bars both: our age is quite undone.

What folly can be ranker? like our shadows,

Our wishes lengthen as our sun declines,

No wish should loiter, then, this side the grave.

ur hearts should leave the world before the knell
lls for our carcasses to mend the soil.
ough to live in tempest; die in port:
e should fly concourse, cover in retreat
fects of judgment, and the will subdue;
lk thoughtful on the silent solemn shore
that vast ocean it must sail so soon,
d put good works on board, and wait the wind
at shortly blows us into worlds unknown:
unconsider'd, too, a dreadful scene!
ll should be prophets to themselves; foresee
eir future fate; their future fate foretaste:
is art would waste the bitterness of death.
o thought of death alone the fear destroys:
disaffection to that precious thought
more than midnight darkness on the soul,
ich sleeps beneath it on a precipice,
f'd off by the first blast, and lost for ever.
ost ask, Lorenzo, why so warmly prest,
repetition hammer'd on thine ear,
thought of death? That thought is the machine,
grand machine! that heaves us from the dust,
d rears us into men. That thought, ply'd home,
ll soon reduce the ghastly precipice
ranging hell, will soften the descent,
d gently slope our passage to the grave.
w warmly to be wish'd! what heart of flesh
uld trifl with tremendous? dare extremes?
wn o'er the fate of infinite? what hand,
ond the blackest brand of censure bold,
speak a language too well known to thee?
uld at a moment give its all to Chance,
I stamp the dye for an eternity?
id me, Narcissa! aid me to keep pace
h destiny, and, ere her scissars cut
thread of life, to break this tougher thread
moral death, that ties me to the world.
ug thou my slumbering reason to send forth
hought of observation on the foe;
sally, and survey the rapid march

Of his ten thousand messengers to man,
Who, Jehu-like, behind him turns them all.
All accident apart, by Nature sign'd,
My warrant is gone out, though dormant yet;
Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.

Must I then forward only look for Death?
Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there.
Man is a self-survivor every year.
Man, like a stream, is in perpetual flow.
Death's a destroyer of quotidian prey:
My youth, my noon-tide his; my yesterday:
The bold invader shares the present hour.
Each moment on the former shuts the grave.
While man is growing, life is in decrease,
And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.
Our birth is nothing but our death begun,
As tapers waste that instant they take fire.

Shall we then fear lest that should come to pass
Which comes to pass each moment of our lives?
If fear we must, let that death turn us pale
Which murders strength and ardour; what remains
Should rather call on Death than dread his call.
Ye partners of my fault, and my decline!
Thoughtless of death, but when your neighbour's knell
(Rude visitant!) knocks hard at your dull sense,
And with its thunder scarce obtains your ear!
Be death your theme in every place and hour;
Nor longer want, ye monumental sires!
A brother tomb to tell you—you shall die.
That death you dread (so great is Nature's skill!)
Know you shall court before you shall enjoy.

But you are learn'd; in volumes deep you sit,
In wisdom shallow. Pompous ignorance!
Would you be still more learned than the learn'd?
Learn well to know how much need not be known,
And what that knowledge which impairs your sense.
Our needful knowledge, like our needful food,
Unhedg'd, lies open in life's common field,
And bids all welcome to the vital feast.
You scorn what lies before you in the page

Night V. THE RELAPSE. 89

Of Nature and Experience, moral truth;
Of indispensable, eternal fruit,
Fruit on which mortals feeding turn to gods;
And dive in science for distinguish'd names,
Dishonest fomentation of your pride,
Sinking in virtue as you rise in fame.
Your learning, like the lunar beam, affords
Light, but not heat; it leaves you undevout,
Frozen at heart, while speculation shines.
Awake, ye curious Indagators! fond
Of knowing all but what avails you known.
If you would learn Death's character, attend.
All casts of conduct, all degrees of health,
All dyes of fortune, and all dates of age,
Together shook in his impartial urn,
Come forth at random; or, if choice is made,
The choice is quite sarcastic, and insults
All bold conjecture and fond hopes of man.
What countless multitudes not only leave,
But deeply disappoint us, by their deaths!
Though great our sorrow, greater our surprise.

Like other tyrants, Death delights to smite
What, smitten, most proclaims the pride of pow'r
And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme
To bid the wretch survive the fortunate;
The feeble wrap th' athletic in his shroud;
And weeping fathers build their children's tomb:
Me thine, Narcissa!—What, though short thy date?
Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.
That life is long which answers life's great end,
The time that bears no fruit deserves no name.
The man of wisdom is the man of years.
In hoary youth Methusalems may die;
O how misdated on their flattering tombs!

Narcissa's youth has lectur'd me thus far;
And can her gaiety give counsel too?
That, like the Jews' fam'd oracle of gems,
Sparkles instruction; such as throws new light,
And opens more the character of Death,
Ill known to thee, Lorenzo! this thy vaunt!—

' Give death his due, the wretched and the old;
E'en let him sweep his rubbish to the grave;
Let him not violate kind Nature's laws,
But own man born to live as well as die.'
Wretched and old thou giv'st him; young and gay
He takes; and plunder is a tyrant's joy.
What if I prove, ' the farthest from the fear
Are often nearest to the stroke of fate?'

All more than common menaces an end.
A blaze betokens brevity of life.
As if bright embers should emit a flame,
Glad spirits sparkled from Narcissa's eye,
And made Youth younger, and taught life to live.
As Nature's opposites wage endless war,
For this offence, as treason to the deep
Inviolable stupor of his reign,
Where lust and turbulent ambition sleep,
Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,
More life is still more odious; and, reduc'd
By conquest, aggrandiz'd?—By Heaven's decree
To plant the soul on her eternal guard,
In awful expectation of our end.
Thus runs Death's dread commission; ' Strike, but so
As most alarms the living by the dead.'
Hence stratagem delights him, and surprise,
And cruel sport with man's securities.
Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim;
And where least feir'd, there conquest triumphs most.
This proves my bold assertion not too bold.
What are his arts to lay our fears asleep?
Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up
In deep Dissimulation's darkest night.
Like princes unconfess'd in foreign courts,
Who travel under cover, Death assumes
The name and look of Life, and dwells among us:
He takes all shapes that serve his black designs:
Though master of a wider empire far
Than that o'er which the Roman Eagle flew,
Like Nero, he's a fiddler, charioteer:

When Pleasure treads the paths which Reason shuns,

When against Reason, Riot shuts the door,

And gaiety supplies the place of sense,

Then, foremost at the banquet and the ball,

Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly dye,

Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown.

Gaily carousing to his gay compeers,

Inly he laughs to see them laugh at him,

As absent far; and when the revel burns,

When Fear is banish'd, and triumphant Thought,

Calling for all the joys beneath the moon,

Against him turns the key, and bids him sup

With their progenitors—he drops his mask,

Frowns out at full; they start, despair, expire.

Scarce with more sudden terror and surprise,

From his black mask of nitre, touch'd by fire,

He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.

And is not this triumphant treachery,

And more than simple conquest, in the fiend?

And now, Lorenzo, dost thou wrap thy soul

In soft security, because unknown

Which moment is commission'd to destroy?

In death's uncertainty thy danger lies.

Is death uncertain? therefore thou be fix'd,

Fix'd as a sentinel, all eye, all ear,

All expectation of the coming foe.

Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear,

Lest Slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,

And Fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be strong;

Thus give each day the merit and renown

Of dying well, though doom'd but once to die;

Nor let life's period, hidden, (as from most)

Hide, too, from thee the precious use of life.

Early, not sudden, was Narcissus's fate:

Soon, not surprising, Death his visit paid:

Her thought went forth to meet him on his way,

Nor Gaiety forgot it was to die.

Though Fortune, too, (our third and final theme)

As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,

And every glittering gewgaw, on her sight,

To dazzle and debauch it from its mark,

Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man,
And every thought that misses it is blind.
Fortune with Youth and Gaiety conspir'd
To weave a triple wreath of happiness,
(If happiness on earth) to crown her brow:
And could Death charge thro' such a shining shield?

That shining shield invites the tyrant's spear,
As if to damp our elevated aims,
And strongly preach humility to man.
O how portentous is prosperity!
How, comet-like, it threatens while it shines!
Few years but yield us proof of Death's ambition,
To cull his victims from the fairest fold,
And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life.
When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er
With recent honours, bloom'd with every bliss,
Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,
The gaudy centre, of the public eye;
When Fortune, thus, has toss'd her child in air,
Snatch'd from the covert of an humble state,
How often have I seen him dropt at once,
Our morning's envy! and our evening's sigh!
As if her bounties were the signal giv'n,
The flowery wreath, to mark the sacrifice,
And call Death's arrows on the destin'd prey.

High Fortune seems in cruel league with Fate.
Ask you for what? to give his war on man
The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil;
Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.
And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime
Of life? to hang his airy nest on high,
On the slight timber of the topmost bough,
Rock'd at each breeze, and menscang a fall?
Granting grim Death at equal distance there,
Yet peace begins just where ambition ends.
What makes man wretched? happiness denied?
Lorenzo! no; 'tis happiness disdain'd:
She comes too meanly dress'd to win our smile,
And calls herself Content, a homely name!
Our flame is transport, and content our scorn.
Ambition turns, and slants the door against her,

And weds a toil, a tempest, in her stead;
A tempest to warm transport near of kin.
Unknowing what our mortal state admits,
Life's modest joys we ruin while we raise,
And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace;
Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

And since thy peace is dear, ambitious youth!
Of fortune fond! as thoughtless of thy fate!
As late I drew Death's picture, to stir up
Thy wholesome fears; now, drawn in contrast, see
Gay Fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand.
See, high in air the sportive goddess hangs,
Unlocks her casket, spreads her glittering ware,
And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad
Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.
All rush rapacious; friends o'er trodden friends,
Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings,
Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair,
(Still more ador'd) to snatch the golden show'r.

Gold glitters most where virtue shines no more,
As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.
O what a precious pack of votaries,
Unkennell'd from the prisons and the stews,
Pour in, all opening in their idol's praise!
All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand,
And, wide-expanding their voracious jaws,
Morsel on morsel swallow down unchew'd,
Untasted, through mad appetite for more;
Gorg'd to the throat, yet lean and ravenous still:
Sagacious all to trace the smallest game,
And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest chance!)
Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe; they launch, they fly,
O'er just, o'er sacred, all-forbidden ground,
Drunk with the burning scent of place or pow'r,
Staunch to the foot of Lucre till they die.

Or if for men you take them, as I mark
Their manners, thou their various fates survey,
With aim mismeasur'd and impetuous speed,
Some, darting, strike their ardent wish far off,
Through fury to possess it: some succeed,
But stumble, and let fall the taken prize.

Night V. THE RELAPSE. 95

From some, by sudden blasts, 'tis whirl'd away,
And lodg'd in bosoms that ne'er dream'd of gain.
To some it sticks so close, that, when torn off,
Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.
Some, o'er-enamour'd of their bags, run mad;
Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.
Together some (unhappy rivals!) seize,
And rend abundance into poverty;
Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles;
Smiles, too, the goddess; but smiles most at those
(Just victims of exorbitant desire!)
Who perish at their own request, and, whelm'd
Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire.
Fortune is famous for her numbers slain;
The number small which happiness can bear.
Though various for awhile their fates, at last
One curse involves them all: at Death's approach
All read their riches backward into loss,
And mourn in just proportion to their store.

And Death's approach (if orthodox my song)
Is hasten'd by the lure of Fortune's smiles.
And art thou still a glutton of bright gold?
And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin?
Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow;
A blow which, while it executes, alarms,
And startles thousands with a single fall.
As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,
Which nods aloft and proudly spreads her shade,
The sun's defiance, and the flock's defence,
By the strong strokes of labouring hinds subdued,
Loud groans her last, and, rushing from her height,
In cumbrous ruin thunders to the ground;
The conscious forest trembles at the shock,
And hill, and stream, and distant dale, resound.

These high-aim'd darts of Death, and these alone,
Should I collect, my quiver would be full;
A quiver which, suspended in mid air,
Or near Heaven's archer, in the zodiac, hung,
(So could it be) should draw the public eye,
The gaze and contemplation of mankind!
A constellation awful, yet benign,

To guide the gay through life's tempestuous wave,
Nor suffer them to strike the common rock;
From greater danger to grow more secure,
And, wrapt in happiness, forget their fate.
Lysander, happy past the common lot,
Was warn'd of danger, but too gay to fear.
He woo'd the fair Aspasia; she was kind.
In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were bless'd:
All who knew envied; yet in envy lov'd:
Can fancy form more finish'd happiness?
Fix'd was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome
Rose on the sounding beach. The glittering spires
Float in the wave, and break against the shore;
So break those glittering shadows, human joys.
The faithless morning smil'd: he takes his leave
To re-embrace, in ecstasies, at eve:
The rising storm forbids: the news arrives;
Untold she saw it in her servant's eye.
She felt it seen, (her heart was apt to feel)
And drown'd, without the furious ocean's aid,
In suffocating sorrows shares his tomb.
Now round the sumptuous bridal monument
The guilty billows innocently roar,
And the rough sailor passing, drops a tear.
A tear?—can tears suffice?—but not for me.
How vain our efforts! and our arts how vain!
The distant train of thought I took, to shun,
Has thrown me on my fate.—These died together;
Happy in ruin! undivorc'd by death!
Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part, is peace.—
Narcissa! Pity bleeds at thought of thee;
Yet thou wast only near me, not myself.
Survive myself?—that cures all other woe.
Narcissa lives; Philander is forgot.
O the soft commerce! O the tender ties,
Close twisted with the fibres of the heart!
Which, broken, break them, and drain off the soul
Of human joy, and make it pain to live.—
And is it then to live? When such friends part,
'Tis the survivor dies.—My heart! no more.

PREFACE.

mortality are not far from being Christians: for it is hard to conceive that a man, fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly and impartially inquire after the surest means of escaping one, and securing the other: and of such an earnest and impartial inquiry I well know the consequence.

Here, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offered; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers; arguments which appear to me altogether irresistible, and such as, I am satisfied, will have great weight with all who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bosoms, and of observing, with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes round about them in the world. If some arguments shall here occur which others have declined, they are submitted, with all deference, to better judgments, in this, of all points, the most important! for as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed; but it is undisputed for this reason only, viz. because where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be indisputable: and, of consequence, no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity, which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.

THE
Complaint.

—————
NIGHT VI.
—————

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.
IN TWO PARTS.

*Containing the Nature, Proof, and Importance, of
Immortality.*

—————
PART I.

Where, among other Things, Glory and Riches are particularly considered.

Inscribed to the Rt. Hon. Henry Pelham.

SHE* (for I know not yet her name in Heaven)
Not early, like Narcissa, left the scene,
Nor sudden, like Philander. What avail?
This seeming mitigation but inflames;
This fancied med'cine heightens the disease.
The longer known, the closer still she grew,
And gradual parting is a gradual death.
'Tis the grim tyrant's engine which extorts,
By tardy pressure's still-increasing weight,
From hardest hearts confession of distress.

O the long dark approach, through years of pain,
Death's gallery! (might I dare to call it so)
With dismal doubt and subtle terror hung,
Sick Hope's pale lamp its only glimmering ray:
There Fate my melancholy walk ordain'd,
Forbid self-love itself to flatter there.
How oft I gaz'd, prophetically sad!
How oft I saw her dead, while yet in smiles!

* Referring to Night the Fifth.

In smiles she sunk her grief to lessen mine :
She spoke me comfort, and increas'd my pain.

Like powerful armies trenching at a town,
By slow and silent, but resistless sup,
In his pale progress gently gaining ground,
Death urg'd his deadly siege ; in spite of art,
Of all the balmy blessings Nature lends
To succour frail humanity. Ye Stars!

(Not now first made familiar to my sight)
And thou, O Moon ! bear witness ; many a night
He tore the pillow from beneath my head,
Tied down my sore attention to the shock,
By ceaseless depredations on a life
Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful post
Of observation ! darker every hour !

Less dread the day that drove me to the brink,
And pointed at eternity below,
When my soul shudder'd at futurity ;
When, on a moment's point, th' important dye
Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell,
And turn'd up life, my title to more woe.

By why more woe ? more comfort let it be.
Nothing is dead but that which wish'd to die ;
Nothing is dead but wretchedness and pain ;
Nothing is dead but what incumber'd, gall'd,
Block'd up the pass, and barr'd from real life,
Where dwells that wish most ardent of the wise ?
Too dark the sun to see it ; highest stars
Too low to reach it ; Death, great Death alone,
O'er stars and sun triumphant, lands us there.

Nor dreadful our transition, though the mind,
An artist at creating self-alarms,
Rich in expedients for inquietude,
Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take
Death's portrait true ? the tyrant never sat.
Our sketch all random strokes, conjecture all ;
Close shuts the grave, nor tells one single tale.
Death and his image rising in the brain
Bear faint resemblance ; never are alike ;
Fear shakes the pencil ; Fancy loves excess :

To see, before each glance of piercing thought,
All cloud, all shadow, blown remote, and leave
No mystery—but that of love divine,
Which lifts us on the seraph's flaming wing,
From earth's aceldama, this field of blood,
Of inward anguish, and of outward ill,
From darkness and from dust, to such a scene!
Love's element! true joy's illustrious home!
From earth's sad contrast (now deplor'd) more fair!
What exquisite vicissitude of fate!
Bless'd absolution of our blackest hour!

Lorenzo! these are thoughts that make man man,
The wise illumine, aggrandize the great.
How great, (while yet we tread the kindred clod,
And every moment fear to sink beneath
The clod we tread, soon trodden by our sons)
How great, in the wild whirl of time's pursuits,
To stop, and pause; involv'd in high pressage,
Through the long vista of a thousand years,
To stand contemplating our distant selves,
As in a magnifying mirror seen,
Enlarg'd, ennobled, elevate, divine!
To prophesy our own futurities!
To gaze in thought on what all thought transcends!
To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys
As far beyond conception as desert,
Ourselves th' astonish'd talkers and the tale!

Lorenzo! swells thy bosom at the thought?
The swell becomes thee: 'tis an honest pride.
Revere thyself,—and yet thyself despise.
His nature no man can o'er-rate, and none
Can under-rate his merit. Take good heed
Nor there be modest where thou shouldst be proud;
That almost universal error shun.
How just our pride, when we behold those heights!
Not those Ambition paints in air, but those
Reason points out, and ardent Virtue gains,
And angels emulate. Our pride how just!
When mount we? when these shackles cast? when quit
This cell of the creation? this small nest,

Divide the crystal waves of ether pure,
In endless voyage without port! The least
Of these disseminated orbs how great!
Great as they are, what numbers these surpass,
Huge as leviathan to that small race,
Those twinkling multitudes of little life,
He swallows unperceiv'd! Stupendous these?
Yet what are these stupendous to the whole?
As particles, as atoms ill-perceiv'd;
As circulating globules in our veins;
So vast the plan. Fecundity divine!
Exuberant Source! perhaps I wrong thee still.

If admiration is a source of joy,
What transport hence! yet this the least in Heav'n.
What this to that illustrious robe He wears,
Who toss'd this mass of wonders from his hand,
A specimen, an earnest, of his power?
'Tis to that glory, whence all glory flows,
As the mead's meanest floweret to the sun,
Which gave it birth. But what this sun of Heav'n?
This bliss supreme of the supremely blest?
Death, only death, the question can resolve,
By death cheap bought th' ideas of our joy;
The bare ideas! solid happiness.
So distant from its shadow chas'd below.

And chase we still the phantom through the fire,
O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death?
And toil we still for sublunary pay?
Defy the dangers of the field and flood,
Or, spider-like, spin out our precious all,
Our more than vitals spin, (if no regard
To great futurity) in curious webs
Of subtle thought and exquisite design.
(Fine net-work of the brain!) to catch a fly!
The momentary buzz of vain renown!
A name! a mortal immortality!

Or (meaner still!) instead of grasping air,
For sordid lucre plunge we in the mire?
Drudge, sweat, through every shame, for every gain
For vile contaminating trash! throw up

Renown that would not quit thee though disgrac'd,
Nor leave thee pendent on a master's smile.
Other ambition Nature interdicts;
Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,
By pointing at his origin and end;
Milk and a swathe, at first, his whole demand;
His whole domain, at last, a turf or stone;
To whom, between, a world may seem too small.

Souls truly great dart forward on the wing
Of just ambition, to the grand result,
The curtain's fall; there see the buskin'd chief
Unshod behind this momentary scene,
Reduc'd to his own stature, low or high,
As vice or virtue sinks him, or sublimes;
And laugh at this fantastic mummery,
This antic prelude of grotesque events,
Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray
A littleness of soul by worlds o'er-run,
And nations laid in blood. Dread sacrifice
To Christian pride! which had with horror shock'd
The darkest Pagans, offer'd to their gods.

O thou Most Christian! enemy to peace!
Again in arms? again provoking Fate?
That prince, and that alone, is truly great,
Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheathes;
On empire builds what empire far outweighs,
And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies.

Why this so rare? because forgot of all
The day of death, that venerable day
Which sits as judge; that day which shall pronounce
On all our days, absolve them, or condemn.
Lorenzo! never shut thy thought against it;
Be levees ne'er so full, afford it room,
And give it audience in the cabinet.
That friend consulted, flatteries apart,
Will tell thee fair if thou art great or mean.

To dote on aught may leave us, or be left,
Is that ambition? then let flames descend,
Point to the centre their inverted spires,
And learn humiliation from a soul

Eternity depending covers all;
Eternity depending all achieves;
Sets earth at distance; casts her into shades;
Blends her distinctions; abrogates her pow'rs;
The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,
Fortune's dread frowns, and fascinating smiles,
Make one promiscuous and neglected heap,
The man beneath; if I may call him man,
Whom immortality's full force inspires.
Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought;
Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,
By minds quite conscious of their high descent,
Their present province, and their future prize;
Divinely darting upward every wish,
Warm on the wing, in glorious absence lost!

Doubt you this truth? why labours your belief?
If earth's whole orb, by some due-distanc'd eye
Were seen at once, her towering Alps would sink,
And levell'd Atlas leave an even sphere.
Thus earth, and all that earthly minds admire,
Is swallow'd in Eternity's vast round.
To that stupendous view, when souls awake,
So large of late, so mountainous to man,
Time's toys subside, and equal all below.

Enthusiastic this? then all are weak
But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height
Some souls have soar'd, or martyrs ne'er had bled:
And all may do what has by man been done.
Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,
Boundless, interminable joys can weigh
Unraptur'd, unexalted, uninflam'd?
What slave unbless'd, who from to-morrow's dawn
Expects an empire? he forgets his chain,
And, thron'd in thought, his absent sceptre waves.

And what a sceptre waits us! what a throne!
Her own immense appointments to compute,

Or comprehend her high prerogatives,
In this her dark minority, how toils,
How vainly pants, the human soul divine!
Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy;
What heart but trembles at so strange a bliss?

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 115

In spite of all the truths the Muse has sung,
Ne'er to be priz'd enough! enough revolv'd!
Are there who wrap the world so close about them,
They see no farther than the clouds, and dance
On heedless Vanity's fantastic toe,
Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career,
Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and song?
Are there, Lorenzo? is it possible?
Are there on earth (let me not call them men)
Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts,
Unconscious as the mountain of its ore,
Or rock of its inestimable gem?
When rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, these
Shall know their treasure; treasure then no more.

Are there (still more amazing!) who resist
The rising thought? who smother, in its birth,
The glorious truth? who struggle to be brutes?
Who through this bosom-barrier burst their way,
And, with revers'd ambition, strive to sink?
Who labour downwards through th' opposing powers
Of instinct, reason, and the world against them,
To dismal hopes, and shelter in the shock
Of endless night? night darker than the grave?
Who fight the proofs of immortality?
With horrid zeal, and execrable arts,
Work all their engines, level their black fires,
To blot from man this attribute divine,
(Than vital blood far dearer to the wise)
Blasphemers, and rank atheists to themselves?
To contradict them, see all nature rise!
What object, what event, the moon beneath,
But argues, or endears, an after-scene?
To reason proves, or weds it to desire?
All things proclaim it needful; some advance
One precious step beyond, and prove it sure.
A thousand arguments swarm round my pen,
From Heav'n, and earth, and man. Indulge a few,
By Nature, as her common habit, worn;
So pressing Providence a truth to teach,
Which truth untaught, all other truths were vain.

Thou! whose all-providential eye surveys,
Whose hand directs, whose spirit fills and warms
Creation, and holds empire far beyond!

Eternity's inhabitant august!

Of two eternities amazing Lord!
One past ere man's or angel's had begun,
Aid! while I rescue from the foe's assault
Thy glorious immortality in man;
A theme for ever, and for all, of weight,
Of moment infinite! but relish'd most
By those who love thee most, who most adore.

Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth
Of thee the Great Immutable, to man
Speaks wisdom; is his oracle supreme;
And he who most consults her is most wise.
Lorenzo! to this heavenly Delphos haste,
And come back all-immortal, all-divine.
Look Nature through, 'tis revolution all;
All change, no death: day follows night, and night
The dying day: stars rise, and set, and rise:
Earth takes th' example. See, the Summer gay,
With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,
Droops into pallid Autumn: Winter gray,
Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,
Blows Autumn, and his golden fruits away,
Then melts into the spring: soft Spring, with breath
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,
Recalls the first. All, to resplendish, fades:
As in a wheel all sinks to reascend:
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

With this minute distinction, emblems just,
Nature revolves, but man advances; both
Eternal: that a circle, this a line:
That gravitates, this soars. Th' aspiring soul,
Ardent and tremulous, like flame, ascends,
Zeal and humility her wings, to Heav'n.
The world of matter, with its various forms,
All dies into new life. Life born from death
Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.
No single atom, once in being, lost,
With change of counsel charges the Most High.

O what indignity to deathless souls!
What treason to the majesty of man!
Of man immortal! Hear the lofty style:
' If so decreed, th' Almighty will be done.
Let earth dissolve, yon ponderous orbs descend,
And grind us into dust. The soul is safe;
The man emerges; mounts above the wreck,
As towering flame from Nature's funeral pyre;
O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles;
His charter, his inviolable rights,
Well-pleas'd to learn from Thunder's impotence,
Death's pointless darts and Hell's defeated storms.
But these chimeras touch not thee, Lorenzo!
The glories of the world thy sev'nfold shield.
Other ambition than of crowns in air,
And superlunary felicities,
Thy bosom warms. I'll cool it, if I can,
And turn those glories that enchant against thee.
What ties thee to this life proclaims the next.
If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure.
Come, my Ambitious! let us mount together,
(To mount Lorenzo never can refuse)
And from the clouds, where Pride delights to dwell,
Look down on earth.—What seest thou? wondrous
Terrestrial wonders that eclipse the skies. Ithings!
What lengths of labour'd lands! what loaded seas!
Loaded by man for pleasure, wealth, or war!
Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,
His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.
Nor can th' eternal rocks his will withstand:
What leveill'd mountains! and what lifted vales!
O'er vales and mountains sumptuous cities swell,
And gild our landscape with their glittering spires.
Some mid the wondering waves majestic rise,
And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms.
Far greater still! (what cannot mortal might?)
See wide dominions ravish'd from the deep!
The narrow'd deep with indignation foams.
Or southward turn, to delicate and grand,
The finer arts there ripen in the sun.

PREFACE
TO
PART II.
OF
THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

AS we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners, of France. A land of levity is a land of guilt. A serious mind is the native soil of every *virtus*; and the single character that does true honour to mankind. The soul's immortality has been the favourite theme with the serious of all ages. Nor is it strange; it is a subject by far the most interesting and important that can enter the mind of man. Of highest moment this subject always was, and always will be: yet this its highest moment seems to admit of increase at this day; a sort of occasional importance is superadded to the natural weight of it, if that opinion which is advanced in the Preface to the preceding Night be just. It is there supposed that all our Infidels, whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronise, are betrayed into their deplorable *error* by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom: and the more I consider this point, the more I am persuaded of the truth of that opinion. Though the distrust of a fatuity is a strange error, yet it is an error into which bad men may naturally be distressed: for it is impossible to bid defiance to final ruin, without some refuge in imagination, some presumption of escape. And what presumption is there? there are but two in Nature; but two within the compass of human thought; and these are,—That either God will not or cannot punish. Considering the divine attributes, the first is too gross to be digested by our strongest wishes; and since Omnipotence is as much a divine attribute as holiness, that God cannot punish is as absurd a supposition as the former. God certainly can punish as long as wicked men exist. In non-existence, therefore, is their only refuge; and, consequently, non-existence is their strongest wish; and strong wishes have a strange influence on our opinion; they bias the judgment in a manner almost incredible. And since on this member of their alternative there are some very small appearances in their favour, and none at all on

PREFACE.

the other, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimera, to save themselves from the shock and horror of an immediate and absolute despair.

On reviewing my subject, by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, threw upon it, I was more inclined than ever to pursue it, as it appeared to me to strike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages it is, accordingly, pursued at large, and some arguments for immortality, new at least to me, are ventured on in them. There, also, the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view than is (I think) to be met with elsewhere.

The gentlemen for whose sake this attempt was chiefly made, profess great admiration for the wisdom of Heathen antiquity: what pity it is they are not sincere! if they were sincere, how would it mortify them to consider with what contempt and abhorrence their notions would have been received by those whom they so much admire. What degree of contempt and abhorrence would fall to their share, may be conjectured by the following matter of fact (in my opinion) extremely memorable. Of all their Heathen worthies, Socrates ('tis well known) was the most guarded, dispassionate, and composed; yet this great master of temper was angry, and angry at his last hour; and angry with his friend; and angry for what deserved acknowledgement; angry for a right and tender instance of true friendship towards him. Is not this surprising? what could be the cause? The cause was for his honour; it was a truly noble, though, perhaps, a too punctilious regard for immortality: for his friend asking him, with such an affectionate concern as became a friend, "Where he should deposit his remains?" it was resented by Socrates, as implying a dishonourable supposition that he could be so mean as to have regard for any thing, even in himself, that was not immortal.

This fact, well considered, would make our Infidels withdraw their admiration from Socrates, or make them endeavour, by their imitation of this illustrious example to share his glory; and, consequently, it would incline them to peruse the following pages with candour and impartiality, which is all I desire, and that for their sakes; for I am persuaded that an unprejudiced infidel must, necessarily, receive some advantageous impressions from them.

July 7, 1744.

THE
Complaint.

NIGHT VII.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED
PART II.

Containing the Nature, Proof, and Importance
of mortality.

HEAV'N gives the needful, but neglects
What day, what hour, but knocks at human doors
To wake the soul to sense of future scenes?
Deaths stand, like Mercurys, in every way,
And kindly point us to our journey's end.
Pope, who couldst make immortals! art thou
I give thee joy; nor will I take my leave
So soon to follow. Man but dives in death,
Dives from the sun, in fairer day to rise,
The grave his subterranean road to bliss.
Yes, infinite indulgence plann'd it so;
Through various parts our glorious story runs,
Time gives the preface, endless age unrolls
The volume (ne'er unroll'd) of human fate.
This earth and skies * already have produced
The world's a prophecy of worlds to come,
And who what God foretels (who speaks)
Still louder than in words) shall dare deny?
If Nature's arguments appear too weak,
Turn a new leaf, and stronger read in man:
If man sleeps on, untaught by what he sees,
Can he prove infidel to what he feels?
He, whose blind thought futurity denies,

* Night the Sixth.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

123

Unconscious bears, Bellerophon! like thee,
His own indictment; he condemns himself;
Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life;
Or Nature there, imposing on her sons,
Has written fables: man was made a lie.
Why discontent for ever harbour'd there?
Incurable consumption of our peace!
Resolve me why the cottager and king,
He whom sea-sever'd realms obey, and he
Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,
Repelling winter blasts with mud and straw,
Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh,
In fate so distant, in complaint so near?
Is it that things terrestrial can't content?
Deep in rich pasture will thy flocks complain?
Not so; but to their master is denied
To share their sweet serene. Man, ill at ease
In this, not his own place, this foreign field,
Where Nature fodders him with other food,
Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,
Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,
Sighs on for something more, when most enjoy'd.
Is Heav'n then kinder to thy flocks than thee?
Not so; thy pasture richer, but remote;
In part remote; for that remoter part
Man bleats from instinct, though, perhaps, debauch'd
By sense, his reason sleeps, nor dreams the cause.
The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes!
His grief is but his grandeur in disguise,
And discontent is immortality.
Shall sons of Ether, shall the blood of Heav'n,
Set up their hopes on earth, and stable here,
With brutal acquiescence in the mire?
Lorenzo! no; they shall be nobly pain'd;
The glorious foreigners, distress'd, shall sigh
On thrones, and thou congratulate the sigh.
Man's misery declares him born for bliss;
His anxious heart asserts the truth I sing,
And gives the sceptic in his head the lie.
Our heads, our hearts, our passions, and our powers,

Speak the same language; call us to the skies;
Unripen'd these, in this inclement clime,
Scarce rise above conjecture and mistake;
And for this land of trifles those, too strong,
Tumultuous rise, and tempest human life.
What prize on earth can pay us for the storm?
Meet objects for our passions Heav'n ordain'd,
Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave
No fault but in defect. Bless'd Heav'n! avert
A bounded ardour for unbounded bliss!
O for a bliss unbounded! far beneath
A soul immortal is a mortal joy.
Nor are our pow'r's to perish immature;
But, after feeble effort here, beneath
A brighter sun, and in a nobler soil,
Transplanted from this sublunary bed,
Shall flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom.
Reason progressive, instinct is complete;
Swift instinct leaps; slow Reason feebly climbs.
Brutes soon their zenith reach; their little all
Flows in at once; in ages they no more
Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy.
Were man to live coëval with the sun,
The patriarch-pupil would be learning still,
Yet, dying, leave his lesson half-unlearn'd.
Men perish in advance, as if the sun
Should set ere noon, in eastern oceans drown'd;
If fit with dim illustrious to compare,
The sun's meridian with the soul of man.
To man why, stepdame Nature! so severe?
Why thrown aside thy masterpiece half-wrought,
While meaner efforts thy last hand enjoy?
Or if, abortively, poor man must die,
Nor reach what reach he might, why die in dread?
Why curs'd with foresight? wise to misery?
Why of his proud prerogative the prey?
Why less pre-eminent in rank than pain?
His immortality alone can tell,
Full ample fund to balance all amiss,
And turn the scale in favour of the just!

His immortality alone can solve
 That darkest of enigmas, human hope,
 Of all the darkest, if at death we die.
 Hope, eager Hope, th' assassin of our joy,
 All present blessings treading under foot,
 Is scarce a milder tyrant than Despair.
 With no past toils content, still planning new,
 Hope turns us o'er to Death alone for ease.
 Possession why more tasteless than pursuit?
 Why is a wish far dearer than a crown?
 That wish accomplish'd, why the grave of bliss?
 Because in the great future buried deep,
 Beyond our plans of empire and renown,
 Lies all that man with ardour should pursue;
 And He who made him bent him to the right.

Man's heart th' Almighty to the future sets,
 By secret and inviolable springs,
 And makes his hope his sublunary joy.
 Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry still;
 'More, more!' the glutton cries: for something new
 So rages appetite. If man can't mount
 He will descend. He starves on the possess'd:
 Hence the world's master, from Ambition's spire,
 In Caprea plung'd, and div'd beneath the brute.
 In that rank sty why wallow'd Empire's son
 Supreme? because he could no higher fly:
 His riot was Ambition in despair.

Old Rome consulted birds; Lorenzo! thou
 With more success the flight of Hope survey,
 Of restless Hope, for ever on the wing.
 High-perch'd o'er every thought that falcon sits,
 To fly at all that rises in her sight;
 And never stooping, but to mount again
 Next moment, she betrays her aim's mistake,
 And owns her quarry lodg'd beyond the grave.

There should it fail us, (it must fail us there,
 If being fails) more mournful riddles rise,
 And virtue vies with hope in mystery.
 Why virtue? where its praise, its being, fled?
 Virtue is true self-interest pursued;

What true self-interest of quite-mortal man?
To close with all that makes him happy here.
If vice (as sometimes) is our friend on earth,
Then vice is virtue; 'tis our sovereign good.
In self-applause is virtue's golden prize?
No self-applause attends it on thy scheme.

Whence self-applause? from conscience of the right;
And what is right but means of happiness?
No means of happiness when virtue yields;
That basis failing, falls the building too,
And lays in ruin every virtuous joy.

The rigid guardian of a blameless heart,
So long rever'd, so long reputed wise,
Is weak, with rank knight errantries o'er-run.
Why beats thy bosom with illustrious dreams
Of self-exposure, laudable, and great?
Of gallant enterprise, and glorious death?
Die for thy country?—thou romantic fool!
Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink.
Thy country! what to thee?—the Godhead, what
(I speak with awe!) though He should bid thee bleed,
If, with thy blood, thy final hope is spilt?
Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow:
Be deaf; preserve thy being; disobey.

Nor is it disobedience. Know, Lorenzo!
Whate'er th' Almighty's subsequent command,
His first command is this:—'Man, love thyself.'
In this alone free agents are not free.
Existence is the basis, bliss the prize;
If virtue costs existence, 'tis a crime,
Bold violation of our law supreme,
Black suicide, though nations, which consult
Their gain at thy expense, resound applause.

Since virtue's recompense is doubtful here,
If man dies wholly, well may we demand
Why is man suffer'd to be good in vain?
Why to be good in vain is man enjoin'd?
Why to be good in vain is man betray'd?
Betray'd by traitors lodg'd in his own breast,
By sweet complacencies from virtue felt?

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

127

Why whispers Nature lies on Virtue's part?
Or if blind Instinct (which assumes the name
Of sacred Conscience) plays the fool in man,
Why Reason made accomplice in the cheat?
Why are the wisest loudest in her praise?
Can man by reason's beam be led astray?
Or, at his peril, imitate his God?
Since virtue sometimes ruins us on earth,
Or both are true, or man survives the grave,

Or man survives the grave; or own, Lorenzo,
Thy boast supreme a wild absurdity.
Dauntless thy spirit, cowards are thy scorn:
Grant man immortal, and thy scorn is just.
The man immortal, rationally brave,
Dares rush on death—because he cannot die:
But if man loses all when life is lost,
He lives a coward, or a fool expires.
A daring infidel (and such there are,
From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,
Or pure heroical defect of thought)
Of all earth's madmen most deserves a chain.

When to the grave we follow the renown'd
For valour, virtue, science, all we love,
And all we praise; for worth whose noontide beam,
Enabling us to think in higher style,
Mends our ideas of ethereal powers,
Dream we that lustre of the moral world
Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close?
Why was he wise to know, and warm to praise,
And strenuous to transcribe, in human life,
The Mind Almighty? Could it be that Fate,
Just when the lineaments began to shine,
And dawn the Deity, should snatch the draught,
With night eternal blot it out, and give
The skies alarm, lest angels too might die?

If human souls, why not angelic, too,
Extinguish'd, and a solitary God,
O'er ghastly ruin, frowning from his throne?
Shall we this moment gaze on God in man,
The next lose man for ever in the dust?

From dust we disengage, or man mistakes,
And there where least his judgment fears a flaw.
Wisdom and worth how boldly he commends!
Wisdom and worth are sacred names; rever'd
Where not embrac'd; applauded! deified!
Why not compassion'd too? If spirits die,
Both are calamities, inflicted both
To make us but more wretched. Wisdom's eye
Acute, for what: to spy more miseries;
And worth, so recompens'd, new-points their stings.
Or man surmounts the grave, or gain is loss,
And worth exalted humbles us the more.
Thou wilt not patronize a scheme that makes
Weakness and vice the refuge of mankind.
'Has virtue, then, no joys?'—Yes, joys dear-bought,
Talk ne'er so long, in this imperfect state
Virtue and vice are at eternal war.
Virtue's a combat, and who fights for nought,
Or for precarious, or for small reward?
Who virtue's self-reward so loud resound,
Would take degrees angelic here below,
And virtue, while they compliment, betray
By feeble motives and unfaithful guards.
The crown, th' unfading crown, her soul inspires:
'Tis that and that alone, can countervail
The body's treacheries and the world's assaults.
On earth's poor pay our famish'd virtue dies;
Truth incontestable! in spite of all
A Bayle has preach'd, or a Voltaire believ'd.
In man the more we dive, the more we see
Heaven's signet stamping an immortal make.
Dive to the bottom of his soul, the base
Sustaining all, what find we? knowledge, love.
As light and heat, essential to the sun,
These to the soul: and why, if souls expire?
How little lovely here? how little known?
Small knowledge we dig up with endless toil,
And love unfeign'd may purchase perfect hate.
Why starv'd, on earth, our angel-appetites,
While brutal are indulg'd their fulsome fill?

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 129

Were then capacities divine conferr'd,
As a mock-diadem, in savage sport,
Rank insult of our pompous poverty,
Which reaps but pain from seeming claims so fair?
In future age lies no redress? and shuts
Eternity the door on our complaint?
If so, for what strange ends were mortals made!
The worst to wallow, and the best to weep;
The man who merits most, must most complain:
Can we conceive a disregard in Heav'n
What the worst perpetrate, or best endure?

This cannot be. To love and know, in man
Is boundless appetite and boundless pow'r,
And these demonstrate boundless objects too.
Objects, pow'rs, appetites, Heav'n suits in all,
Nor, Nature through, e'er violates this sweet
Eternal concord on her tuneful string.
Is man the sole exception from her laws?
Eternity struck off from human hope,
(I speak with truth, but veneration too)
Man is a monster, the reproach of Heav'n,
A stain, a dark impenetrable cloud
On Nature's beauteous aspect, and deforms
(Amazing blot!) deforms her with her lord.
If such is man's allotment, what is Heav'n?
Or own the soul immortal, or blaspheme.

Or own the soul immortal, or invert
All order. Go, mock-majesty! go, man!
And bow to thy superiors of the stall,
Through every scene of sense superior far:
They graze the turf untill'd, they drink the stream
Unbrew'd, and ever full, and unembitter'd
With doubts, fears, fruitless hopes, regrets, despairs,
Mankind's peculiar! Reason's precious dower!
No foreign clime they ransack for their robes,
Nor brothers cite to the litigious bar;
Their good is good entire, unmix'd, unmarr'd:
They find a paradise in every field,
On boughs forbidden where no curses hang:
Their ill no more than strikes the sense, unstretch'd

By previous dread, or murmur in the rear:
When the worst comes, it comes unfear'd; one stroke
Begins and ends their woe: they die but once;
Bless'd, incomunicable privilege! for which
Proud man, who rules the globe and reads the stars,
Philosopher or hero, sighs in vain.

Account for this prerogative in brutes.
No day, no glimpse of day, to solve the knot,
But what beams on it from eternity.
O sole and sweet solution! that unties
The difficult, and softens the severe;
The cloud on Nature's beanteous face dispels;
Restores bright order; casts the brute beneath,
And reinthrones us in supremacy
Of joy, e'en here. Admit immortal life,
And virtue is knight-errantry no more;
Each virtue brings in hand a golden dower,
Far richer in reversion; hope exults,
And though much bitter in our cup is thrown,
Predominates, and gives the taste of Heav'n.
O wherefore is the Deity so kind?
Astonishing beyond astonishment!
Heav'n our reward—for heav'n enjoy'd below.

Still unsubdued thy stubborn heart?—for there
The traitor lurks who doubts the truth I sing.
Reason is guiltless; Will alone rebels.
What, in that stubborn heart, if I should find
New unexpected witnesses against thee?
Ambition, Pleasure, and the Love of gain!
Canst thou suspect that these, which make the soul
The slave of earth, should own her heir of Heav'n?
Canst thou suspect what makes us disbelieve
Our immortality should prove it sure?

First, then, ambition summon to the bar.
Ambition's shame, extravagance, disgust,
And inextinguishable nature, speak:
Each much deposes; hear them in their turn.
Thy soul, how passionately fond of fame!
How anxious that fond passion to conceal!
We blush, detected in desigus on praise,

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 131

Though for best deeds, and from the best of men;
And why? because immortal. Art divine
Has made the body tutor to the soul;
Heav'n kindly gives our blood a moral flow,
Bids it ascend the glowing cheek, and there
Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim
Which stoops to court a character from man,
While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, sit
Far more than man, with endless praise and blame.

Ambition's boundless appetite outspeaks
The verdict of its shame. When souls take fire
At high presumptions of their own desert,
One age is poor applause: the mighty shout,
The thunder by the living few begun,
Late time must echo, worlds unborn resound.
We wish our names eternally to live;
Wild dream! which ne'er had haunted human thought,
Had not our natures been eternal too.
Instinct points out an interest in hereafter,
But our blind reason sees not where it lies,
Or, seeing, gives the substance for the shade.

Fame is the shade of immortality,
And in itself a shadow; soon as caught
Contemn'd, it shrinks to nothing in the grasp.
Consult th' ambitious, 'tis ambition's cure.
"And is this all?" cried Cesar, at his height,
Disgusted. This third proof Ambition brings
Of immortality. The first in fame,
Observe him near, your envy will abate:
Sham'd at the disproportion vast between
The passion and the purchase, he will sigh
At such success, and blush at his renown,
And why? because far richer prize invites
His heart; far more illustrious glory calls;
It calls in whispers, yet the deafest hear.

And can Ambition a fourth proof supply?
It can, and stronger than the former three,
Yet quite o'erlook'd by some reputed wise.
Though disappointments in ambition pain,
And though success disgusts, yet still, Lorenzo!

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 153

Our private reason is a flatterer;
Thirst of applause calls public judgment in
To poise our own, to keep an even scale,
And give endanger'd Virtue fairer play.

Here a fifth proof arises, stronger still.
Why this so nice construction of our hearts?
These delicate moralities of sense,
This constitutional reserve of aid
To succour Virtue when our reason fails,
If virtue, kept alive by care and toil,
And oft the mark of injuries on earth,
When labour'd to maturity (its bill
Of disciplines and pains unpaid) must die?
Why freighted rich to dash against a rock?
Were man to perish when most fit to live,
O how mis-spent were all these stratagems,
By skill divine inwoven in our frame?
Where are Heav'n's holiness and mercy fled?
Laughs Heav'n, at once, at virtue and at man?
If not, why that discourag'd, this destroy'd?

Thus far Ambition: what says Avarice?
This her chief maxim, which has long been thine:
'The wise and wealthy are the same.'—I grant it.
To store up treasure, with incessant toil,
This is man's province, this his highest praise:
To this great end keen Instinct stings him on:
To guide that instinct, Reason! is thy charge;
'Tis thine to tell us where true treasure lies;
But Reason, failing to discharge her trust,
Or to the deaf discharging it in vain,
A blunder follows, and blind Industry,
Gall'd by the spur, but stranger to the course,
(The course where stakes of more than gold are won)
Overloading with the cares of distant age
The jaded spirits of the present hour,
Provides for an eternity below.

'Thou shalt not covet,' is a wise command,
But bounded to the wealth the sun surveys.
Look farther, the command stands quite revers'd,
And avarice is a virtue most divine.

Refine, exalt, throw down their poisonous le
And make them sparkle in the bowl of bliss

See, the third witness laughs at bliss remo
And falsely promises an Eden here:
Truth she shall speak for once, though prone
A common cheat, and Pleasure is her name.
To Pleasure never was Lorenzo deaf;

Then hear her now, now first thy real friend

Since Nature made us not more fond than
Of happiness, (whence hypocrites in joy!
Makers of mirth! artificers of smiles!)
Why should the joy most poignant sense aff
Burn us with blushes, and rebuke our pride
Those heav'n-born blushes tell us man desce
Ev'n in the zenith of his earthly bliss:
Should Reason take her infidel repose,
This honest instinct speaks our lineage high
This instinct calls on darkness to conceal
Our rapturous relation to the stalls,
Our glory covers us with noble shame,
And he that's unconfounded is unman'd.
The man that blushes is not quite a brute.
Thus far with thee, Lorenzo! will I close,
Pleasure is good, and man for pleasure made
But pleasure full of glory as of joy;
Pleasure which neither blushes nor expires.

The witnesses are heard, the cause is o'er;
Let Conscience file the sentence in her court

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 135

Dearer than deeds that half a realm convey,
Thus seal'd by Truth th' authentic record runs,
‘ Know all; know Infidels,—unapt to know!
“Tis immortality your nature solves;
“Tis immortality deciphers man,
And opens all the mysteries of his make:
Without it half his instincts are a riddle;
Without it all his virtues are a dream:
His very crimes attest his dignity;
His sateless thirst of pleasure, gold, and fame,
Declares him born for blessings infinite.
What less than infinite makes unabsurd
Passions, which all on earth but more inflames?
Fierce passions, so mismeasur'd to this scene,
Stretch'd out, like eagles' wings, beyond our nest,
Far, far beyond the worth of all below,
For earth too large, presage a nobler flight,
And evidence our title to the skies.’

Ye gentle theologues of calmer kind!
Whose constitution dictates to your pen,
Who, cold yourselves, think ardour comes from hell!
Think not our passions from corruption sprung,
Though to corruption now they lend their wings:
That is their mistress, not their mother. All
(And justly) reason deem divine: I see,
I feel a grandeur in the passions too,
Which speaks their high descent and glorious end;
Which speaks them rays of an eternal fire;
In Paradise itself they burnt as strong
Ere Adam fell, though wiser in their aim.
Like the proud Eastern, struck by Providence,
What though our passions are run mad, and stoop,
With low terrestrial appetite, to graze
On trash, on toys, dethron'd from high desire?
Yet still, through their disgrace, no feeble ray
Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell:
But these (like that fall'n monarch when reclaim'd)
When reason moderates the reign aright,
Shall re-ascend, remount their former sphere,

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Where once they soar'd illustrious, ere seduc'd,
By wanton Eve's debauch, to stroll on earth,
And set the sublunary world on fire.

But grant their frenzy lasts; their frenzy fails
To disappoint one providential end
For which Heav'n blew up ardour in our hearts.
Were reason silent, boundless Passion speaks
A future scene of boundless objects too,
And brings glad tidings of eternal day.
Eternal day! 'tis that enlightens all,
And all, by that enlighten'd, proves it sure.
Consider man as an immortal being,
Intelligible all, and all is great;
A crystalline transparency prevails,
And strikes full lustre through the human sphere:
Consider man as mortal, all is dark
And wretched; Reason weeps at the survey.

The learn'd Lorenzo cries, ' And let her weep;
Weak modern Reason: ancient times were wise.'
Authority, that venerable guide,
Stands on my part; the fam'd Athenian Porch
(And who for wisdom so renown'd as they?)
' Denied this immortality to man.'
I grant it; but affirm, they prov'd it too.
A riddle this!—Have patience; I'll explain.

What noble vanities, what moral flights,
Glittering through their romantic wisdom's page,
Make us, at once, despise them and admire?
Fable is flat to these high-season'd Sires;
They leave th' extravagance of song below.
' Flesh shall not feel, or, feeling, shall enjoy
The dagger or the rack; to them alike
A bed of roses or the burning bull.'

In men exploding all beyond the grave,
Strange doctrine this! as doctrine it was strange,
But not as prophecy; for such it prov'd,
And, to their own amazement, was fulfill'd:
They feign'd a firmness Christians need not feign.
The Christian truly triumph'd in the flame;
The Stoic saw, in double wonder lost,

Wonder at them, and wonder at himself,
To find the bold adventures of his thought
Not bold, and that he strove to lie in vain.

Whence, then, those thoughts? those towering thoughts, that flew [pride.

Such monstrous heights?—From instinct and from The glorious instinct of a deathless soul, Confus'dly conscious of her dignity, Suggested truths they could not understand. In Lust's dominion, and in Passion's storm, Truth's system broken, scatter'd fragments lay, As light in chaos glimmering through the gloom; Smit with the pomp of lofty sentiments, Pleas'd Pride proclaim'd what Reason disbeliev'd. Pride, like the Delphic priestess, with a swell Rav'd nonsense, destin'd to be future sense, When life immortal, in full day, should shine, And Death's dark shadows fly the Gospel sun. They spoke what nothing but immortal souls Could speak; and thus the truth they question'd prov'd.

Can, then, absurdities, as well as crimes, Speak man immortal? All things speak him so. Much has been urg'd; and dost thou call for more? Call, and with endless questions be distress'd, All unresolvable, if earth is all.

' Why life a moment, infinite desire?
Our wish eternity, our home the grave?
Heaven's promise dormant lies in human hope;
Who wishes life immortal proves it too.
Why happiness pursued, though never found?
Man's thirst of happiness declares it is,
(For Nature never gravitates to nought)
That thirst unquench'd declares it is not here.
My Lucia, thy Clarissa, call to thought;
Why cordial friendship riveted so deep,
As hearts to pierce at first, at parting rend,
If friend and friendship vanish in an hour?
Is not this torment in the mask of joy?
Why by reflection mar'd the joys of sense?
Why past and future preying on our hearts,

And putting all our present joys to death?
Why labours reason? instinct were as well;
Instinct far better: what can choose can err.
O how infallible the thoughtless brute!
'Twere well his Holiness were half as sure.
Reason with Inclination why at war?
Why sense of guilt? why conscience up in arms?
Conscience of guilt is prophecy of pain,
And bosom counsel to decline the blow.
Reason with inclination ne'er had jarr'd,
If nothing future paid forbearance here.
Thus on—these, and a thousand pleas uncall'd,
All promise, some insure a second scene,
Which, were it doubtful, would be dearer far
Than all things else most certain: were it false,
What truth on earth so precious as the lie?
This world it gives us, let what will ensue;
This world it gives in that high cordial, hope;
The future of the present is the soul.
How this life groans when sever'd from the next!
Poor mutilated wretch that disbelieves!
By dark distrust his being cut in two,
In both parts perishes; life void of joy,
Sad prelude of eternity in pain!
Couldst thou persuade me the next life could fail
Our ardent wishes, how should I pour out
My bleeding heart in anguish, new as deep!
Oh! with what thoughts thy hope, and my despair,
Abhor'd Annihilation! blasts the soul,
And wide extends the bounds of human woe!
Could I believe Lorenzo's system true,
In this black channel would my ravings run:
' Grief from the future borrow'd peace, ere-while,
The future vanish'd! and the present pain'd!
Strange import of unprecedented ill!
Fall how profound! like Lucifer's the fall!
Unequal fate! his fall, without his guilt!
From where fond hope built her pavilion high,
The gods among, hurl'd headlong, hurl'd at once
To night! to nothing! darker still than night.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 139

If 'twas a dream, why wake me my worst foe,
Lorenzo! boastful of the name of friend!
O for delusion! O for error still!
Could vengeance strike much stronger than to plant
A thinking being in a world like this,
Not over-rich before, now beggar'd quite,
More curs'd than at the fall!—The sun goes out!
The thorns shoot up! what thorns in every thought!
Why sense of better? it imbibes worse.
Why sense? why life? if but to sigh, then sink
To what I was! twice nothing! and much woe!
Woe from Heaven's bounties! woe from what was wont
To flatter most, high intellectual powers.
Thought, virtue, knowledge! blessings, by thy scheme,
All poison'd into pains. First, knowledge, once
My soul's ambition, now her greatest dread,
To know myself true wisdom?—No; to shun
That shocking science, parent of Despair!
Avert thy mirror; if I see I die.

* Know my Creator? climb his bless'd abode
By painful speculation, pierce the vail,
Dive in his nature, read his attributes,
And gaze in admiration—on a foe,
Obtruding life, with-holding happiness!
From the full rivers that surround his throne,
Not letting fall one drop of joy on man;
Man gasping for one drop that he might cease
To curse his birth, nor envy reptiles more!
Ye sable clouds! ye darkest shades of night!
Hide him, for ever hide him, from my thought,
Once all my comfort, source and soul of joy!
Now leagued with furies, and with thee*, against me.

* Know his achievements? study his renown?
Contemplate this amazing universe,
Dropt from his hand, with miracles replete!
For what? mid miracles of nobler name
To find one miracle of misery?
To find the being which alone can know

* LORENZO.

And praise his works a blemish on his p
Through Nature's ample range, in though
And start at man, the single mourner th
Breathing high hope! chain'd down to pang!

' Knowing is suffering : and shall Virt
The sigh of Knowledge?—Virtue shares
By straining up the steep of excellent,
By battles fought, and from temptation
What gains she but the pang of seeing v
Angelic worth, soon shuffled in the dark
With every vice, and swept to brutal du
Merit is madness, virtue is a crime,
A crime to reason, if it costs us pain
Unpaid : what pain, amidst a thousand i
To think the most abandon'd, after days
Of triumph o'er their betters, find in de
As soft a pillow, nor make fouler clay!

' Duty! religion!—these, our duty don
Imply reward, Religion is mistake.
Duty!—there's none, but to repel the ch
Ye Cheats! away : ye daughters of my p
Who feign yourselves the favourites of
Ye towering Hopes! abortive energies!
That toss and struggle in my lying brea
To scale the skies, and build presumpti
As I were heir of an eternity.
Vain, vain ambitions! trouble me no mo
Why travel far in quest of sure defeat?
As bounded as my being be my wish.
All is inverted, wisdom is a fool.
Sense! take the rein; blind Passion! dri
And, Ignorance! befriend us on our wa
Ye new, but truest patrons of our peace
Yes, give the pulse full empire; live th
Since as the brute we die: the sum of i
Of godlike man! to revel and to rot.

' But not on equal terms with other b
Their revels a more poignant relish yie
And safer too; they never poisons choo
Instinct than Reason makes more wholes

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

141

And sends all-marring murmur far away.
For sensual life they best philosophise,
Theirs that serene the sages sought in vain:
'Tis man alone expostulates with Heav'n;
His all the power and all the cause to mourn.
Shall human eyes alone dissolve in tears?
And bleed in anguish none but human hearts?
The wide-stretch'd realm of intellectual woe,
Surpassing sensual far, is all our own.
In life so fatally distinguish'd why
Cast in one lot, confounded, lump'd in death?

'Ere yet in being was mankind in guilt?
Why thunder'd this peculiar clause against us,
All-mortal, and all wretched!—Have the skies
Reasons of state their subjects may not scan,
Nor humbly reason when they sorely sigh?
All-mortal and all-wretched!—'Tis too much,
Unparallel'd in Nature: 'tis too much,
On being unrequested at thy hands,
Omnipotent! for I see nought but power.

' And why see that? why thought! To toil and eat,
Then make our bed in darkness, needs no thought.
What superfluities are reasoning souls!
Oh give eternity, or thought destroy.
But without thought our curse were half unfehl;
Its blunted edge would spare the throbbing heart,
And therefore 'tis bestow'd. I thank thee, Reason!
For aiding life's too small calamities,
And giving being to the dread of death.
Such are thy bounties!—Was it then too much
For me to trespass on the brutal rights?
Too much for Heav'n to make one emmet more?
Too much for Chaos to permit my mass
A longer stay with essences unwrought,
Unfashion'd, untormented into man?
Wretched preferment to this round of pains!
Wretched capacity of frenzy, thought!
Wretched capacity of dying, life!
Life, thought, worth, wisdom, all (O foul revolt!)
Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.

' Death, then, has chang'd its nature too. O Death!
Come to my bosom, thou best gift of Heav'n!
Best friend to man! since man is man no more.
Why in this thorny wilderness so long,
Since there's no promis'd land's ambrosial bower
To pay me with its honey for my stings?
If needful to the selfish schemes of Heav'n
To sting us sore, why mock'd our misery?
Why this so sumptuous insult o'er our heads?
Why this illustrious canopy display'd?
Why so magnificently lodg'd Despair?
At stated periods, sure-returning, roll
These glorious orbs, that mortals may compute
Their length of labours and of pains, nor lose
Their misery's full measure?—Smiles with flowers
And fruits, promiscuous, ever-teeming earth,
That man may languish in luxurious scenes,
And in an Eden mourn his wither'd joys?
Claim earth and skies man's admiration, due
For such delights! bless'd animals! too wise
To wonder, and too happy to complain!

' Our doom decreed demands a mournful scene:
Why not a dungeon dark for the condemn'd?
Why not the dragon's subterranean den
For man to howl in? why not his abode
Of the same dismal colour with his fate?
A Thebes, a Babylon, at vast expense
Of time, toil, treasure, art, for owls and adders
As congruous, as for man this lofty dome,
Which prompts proud thought, and kindles high desire;
If from her humble chamber in the dust,
While proud thought swells, and high desire inflames,
The poor worm calls us for her inmates there,
And round us Death's inexorable hand
Draws the dark curtain close, undrawn no more.

' Undrawn no more!—Behind the cloud of death,
Once, I beheld a sun, a sun which gilt
That sable cloud, and turn'd it all to gold.
How the grave's alter'd! fathomless as hell!
A real hell to those who dreamt of Heav'n.

Annihilation! how it yawns before me!
 Next moment I may drop from thought, from sense,
 The privilege of angels and of worms,
 An outcast from existence! and this spirit,
 This all-pervading, this all-conscious soul,
 This particle of energy divine,
 Which travels Nature, flies from star to star,
 And visits gods, and emulates their powers,
 For ever is extinguish'd. Horror! death!
 Death of that death, I fearless, once survey'd!—
 When horror universal shall descend,
 And heaven's dark concave uru all human race,
 On that enormous, unrefunding tomb,
 How just this verse; this monumental sigh!"
 "Beneath the lumber of demolish'd worlds,
 Deep in the rubbish of the general wreck,
 Swept ignominious to the common mass
 Of matter, never dignified with life,
 Here lie proud rationals; the sons of Heav'n!
 The lords of earth! the property of worms!
 Beings of yesterday, and no to-morrow!
 Who liv'd in terror, and in pangs expir'd!
 All gone to rot in chaos, or to make
 Their happy transit into blocks or brutes,
 Nor longer sully their Creator's name."

Lorenzo! hear, pause, ponder, and pronounce.
 Just is this history? if such is man,
 Mankind's historian, though divine, might weep.
 And dares Lorenzo smile?—I know thee proud!
 For once let pride befriend thee: Pride looks pale
 At such a scene, and sighs for something more.
 Amid thy boasts, presumptions, and displays,
 And art thou then a shadow? less than shade?
 A nothing? less than nothing? To have been,
 And not to be, is lower than unborn.
 Art thou ambitious? why then make the worm
 Thine equal: Runs thy taste of pleasure high?
 Why patronise sure death of every joy?
 Charm riches? why choose beggary in the grave,
 Of every hope a bankrupt! and for ever?"

Ambition, Pleasure, Avarice, persuade thee
To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth,
They lately prov'd,* thy soul's supreme desire.

What art thou made of? rather, how unmade?
Great Nature's master-appetite destroy'd,
Is endless life and happiness despis'd:
Or both wish'd here, where neither can be found?
Such man's perverse, eternal war with Heav'n!
Dost thou persist? and is there nought on earth
But a long train of transitory forms,
Rising and breaking millions in an hour?
Bubbles of a fantastic deity, blown up
In sport, and then in cruelty destroy'd?
Oh! for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo!
Destroys thy scheme the whole of human race?
Kind is fell Lucifer compar'd to thee.
Oh! spare this waste of being half-divine,
And vindicate th' economy of Heav'n.

Heav'n is all love, all joy in giving joy;
It never had created but to bless;
And shall it then strike off the list of life
A being bless'd, or worthy so to be?
Heav'n starts at an annihilating God.

Is that all Nature starts at thy desire?
Art such a clod to wish thyself all clay?
What is that dreadful wish?—the dying groan
Of Nature, murder'd by the blackest guilt.
What deadly poison has thy nature drank?
To Nature, undebauch'd, no shock so great.
Nature's first wish is endless happiness;
Annihilation is an after-thought,
A monstrous wish, unborn till Virtue dies.
Ah, oh! what depth of horror lies inclos'd!
For non-existence no man ever wish'd,
But first he wish'd the Deity destroy'd.

If so, what words are dark enough to draw
Thy picture true? the darkest are too fair.
Beneath what baleful planet, in what hour
Of desperation, by what fury's aid,

* In the Sixth Night.

In what infernal posture of the soul,
All hell invited, and all hell in joy
At such a birth, a birth so near of kin,
Did thy foul fancy whelp so black a scheme
Of hopes abortive, faculties half-blown,
And deities begun, reduc'd to dust?

There's nougat (thou say'st) but one eternal flux
Of feeble essences, tumultuous driven
Through time's rough billows into night's abyss.
Say, in this rapid tide of human ruin,
Is there no rock on which man's tossing thought
Can rest from terror, dare his fate survey,
And boldly think it something to be born?
Amid such hourly wrecks of being fair,
Is there no central, all-sustaining base,
All-realizing, all-connecting power,
Which, as it call'd forth all things, can recall,
And force Destruction to refund her spoil?
Command the grave restore her taken prey?
Bid death's dark vale its human harvest yield?
And earth and ocean pay their debt of man,
True to the grand deposit trusted there?
Is there no potentate, whose outstretch'd arm,
When ripening time calls forth th' appointed hour,
Pluck'd from foul Devastation's famish'd maw,
Binds present, past, and future, to his throne?
His throne how glorious! thus divinely grac'd
By germinating beings clustering round!
A garland worthy the Divinity!
A throne by Heaven's omnipotence in smiles,
Built (like a Pharos towering in the waves)
Amidst immense effusions of his love!
An ocean of communicated bliss!

An all-prolific, all-preserving God!
This were a God indeed.—And such is man,
As here presum'd; he rises from his fall.
Think'st thou Omnipotence a naked root,
Each blossom fair of Deity destroy'd?
Nothing is dead: nay, nothing sleeps; each soul,
That ever animated human clay,

Now wakes, is on the wing: and where, O where,
Will the swarm settle?—When the trumpet's call,
As sounding brass, collects us, round Heav'n's throne
Conglob'd, we bask in everlasting day,
(Paternal splendor!) and adhere for ever.
Had not the soul this outlet to the skies,
In this vast vessel of the universe
How should we gasp, as in an empty void!
How in the pangs of famish'd hope expire!

How bright my prospect shines! how gloomy thine!
A trembling world! and a devouring God!
Earth but the shambles of Omnipotence!
Heaven's face all stain'd with causeless massacres
Of countless millions; born to feel the pang
Of being lost. Lorenzo! can it be?
This bids us shudder at the thoughts of life.
Who would be born to such a phantom world,
Where nought substantial but our misery?
Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress,
So soon to perish, and revive no more?
The greater such a joy, the more it pains.
A world so far from great (and yet how great)
It shines to thee! there's nothing real in it;
Being a shadow; consciousness a dream:
A dream how dreadful! universal blank
Before it and behind! poor man a spark
From non-existence struck by wrath divine,
Glittering a moment, nor that moment sure,
Midst upper, nether, and surrounding night,
His sad, sure, sudden, and eternal tomb!

Lorenzo! dost thou feel these arguments?
Or is there nought but vengeance can be felt?
How hast thou dar'd the Deity dethrone?
How dar'd indict him of a world like this?
If such the world, creation was a crime;
For what is crime but cause of misery?
Retract, blasphemer! and unriddle this,
Of endless arguments above, below,
Without us, and within, the short result—
' If man's immortal, there's a God in Heav'n.'

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 147

But wherefore such redundancy? such waste
Of argument? one sets my soul at rest;
One obvious, and at hand, and, oh!—at heart.
So just the skies, Philander's life so pain'd,
His heart so pure, that or succeeding scenes
Have palms to give, or ne'er had he been born.

'What an old tale is this!' Lorenzo cries.—
I grant this argument is old; but truth
No years impair; and had not this been true,
Thou never hadst despis'd it for its age.
Truth is immortal as thy soul, and fable
As fleeting as thy joys. Be wise, nor make
Heaven's highest blessing vengeance. O be wise!
Nor make a curse of immortality.

Say, know'st thou what it is, or what thou art?
Know'st thou th' importance of a soul immortal?
Behold this midnight glory: worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp; redouble this amaze!
Ten thousand add; add twice ten thousand more;
Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all,
And calls th' astonishing magnificence
Of unintelligent creation poor.

For this believe not me; no man believe;
Trust not in words, but deeds; and deeds no less
Than those of the supreme, nor his a few:
Consult them all; consulted, all proclaim
Thy soul's importance. Tremble at thyself,
For whom Omnipotence has wak'd so long;
Has wak'd, and work'd for ages; from the birth
Of Nature to this unbelieving hour.

In this small province of his vast domain
(All Nature bow while I pronounce his name!)
What has God done, and not for this sole end,
To rescue souls from death? the soul's high price
Is writ in all the conduct of the skies.
The soul's high price is the creation's key,
Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays
The genuine cause of every deed divine:
That is the chain of ages which maintains
Their obvious correspondence, and unites

Most distant periods in one bless'd design:
That is the mighty hinge on which have turn'd
All revolutions, whether we regard
The natural, civil, or religious world.
The former two but servants to the third:
To that their duty done, they both expire,
Their mass new-cast, forgot their deeds renown'd,
And angels ask, 'Where once they shone so fair?'
 To lift us from this abject to sublime;
This flux to permanent; this dark to day;
This foul to pure; this turbid to serene;
This mean to mighty!—for this glorious end
Th' Almighty, rising, his long sabbath broke!
The world was made, was ruin'd, was restor'd:
Laws from the skies were publish'd, were repeal'd;
On earth, kings, kingdoms, rose; kings, kingdoms fell;
Fam'd sages lighted up the Pagan world;
Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance
Through distant age; saints travell'd, martyrs bled;
By wonders sacred Nature stood controll'd;
The living were translated; dead were rais'd;
Angels, and more than angels, came from Heav'n;
And, oh! for this descended lower still;
Guilt was hell's gloom; astonish'd at his guest,
For one short moment Lucifer ador'd.
Lorenzo! and wilt thou do less!—For this
That hallow'd page, fools scoff at, was inspir'd,
Of all these truths thrice-venerable code!
Deists! perform your quarantine, and then
Fall prostrate ere you touch it, lest you die.
 Nor less intensely bent infernal powers
To mar, than those of light this end to gain.
O what a scene is here!—Lorenzo! wake!
Rise to the thought; exert, expand thy soul
To take the vast idea; it denies
All else the name of great. Two warring worlds,
Not Europe against Afric! warring worlds!
Of more than mortal! mounted on the wing!
On ardent wings of energy and zeal,
High-hovering o'er this little brand of strife!

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 149

This sublunary ball.—But strife, for what?
In their own cause conflicting! no; in thine,
In man's. His single interest blows the flame;
His the sole stake; his fate the trumpet sounds
Which kindles war immortal. How it burns!
Tumultuous swarms of deities in arms;
Force force opposing, till the waves run high,
And tempest Nature's universal sphere.
Such opposites eternal, stedfast, stern,
Such foes implacable are good and ill; [them.
Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between

Think not this fiction. ‘There was war in Heav'n.’
From Heav'n's high crystal mountain, where it hung,
Th' Almighty's outstretch'd arm took down his bow,
And shot his indignation at the deep:
Re-thunder'd Hell, and darted all her fires.—
And seems the stake of little moment still?
And slumbers man, who singly caus'd the storm?
He sleeps.—And art thou shock'd at mysteries?
The greatest thou. How dreadful to reflect
What ardour, care, and counsel, mortals cause
In breasts divine! how little in their own!

Where'er I turn, how new proofs pour upon me!
How happily this wondrous view supports
My former argument! how strongly strikes
Immortal life's full demonstration here!
Why this exertion? why this strange regard
From Heaven's Omnipotent indulg'd to man?—
Because in man the glorious, dreadful power,
Extremely to be pain'd, or bless'd for ever.
Duration gives importance, swells the price.
An angel, if a creature of a day,
What would he be? a trifle of no weight;
Or stand or fall, no matter which, he's gone.
Because immortal, therefore is indulg'd
This strange regard of deities to dust.
Hence Heav'n looks down on earth with all her eyes;
Hence the soul's mighty moment in her sight;
Hence every soul has partisans above,
And every thought a critic in the skies:

Hence clay, vile clay! has angels for its guard,
And every guard a passion for his charge:
Hence, from all age, the cabinet divine
Has held high counsel o'er the fate of man.

Nor have the clouds those gracious counsels hid;
Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,
And Providence came forth to meet mankind:
In various modes of emphasis and awe
He spoke his will, and trembling Nature heard;
He spoke it loud, in thunder, and in storm:
Witness thou, Sinai; whose cloud-cover'd height,
And shaken basis, own'd the present God:
Witness, ye Billows! whose returning tide,
Breaking the chain that fasten'd it in air,
Swept Egypt and her menaces to hell;
Witness, ye Flames! th' Assyrian tyrant blew
To sevenfold rage, as impotent as strong:
And thou, Earth! witness, whose expanding jaws
Clos'd o'er Presumption's sacrilegious sons;^{*}
Has not each element, in turn, subscrib'd
The soul's high price, and sworn it to the wise?
Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, strove
To strike this truth through adamantine man?
If not all adamant, Lorenzo! hear;
All is delusion; Nature is wrapt up
In tenfold night, from Reason's keenest eye:
There's no consistence, meaning, plan, or end,
In all beneath the sun, in all above,
(As far as man can penetrate) or Heaven
Is an immense, inestimable prize:
Or all is nothing, or that prize is all.—
And shall each toy be still a match for Heaven,
And full equivalent for groans below?
Who would not give a trifle to prevent
What he would give a thousand worlds to cure?
Lorenzo! thou hast seen (if thine to see)
All Nature and her God (by Nature's course,
And Nature's course controll'd) declare for me.

* Korah, &c.

The skies above proclaim 'immortal man!'
And "man immortal!" all below resounds,
The world's a system of theology,
Read by the greatest strangers to the schools;
If honest, learn'd; and sages o'er a plough.
Is not Lorenzo! then, impos'd on thee
This hard alternative, or to renounce
Thy reason and thy sense, or to believe?
What then is unbelief? 'tis an exploit,
A strenuous enterprise; to gain it man
Must burst through every bar of common sense,
Of common shame, magnanimously wrong;
And what rewards the sturdy combatant?
His prize repentance; infamy his crown.

But wherefore infamy!—for want of faith
Down the steep precipice of wrong he slides;
There's nothing to support him in the right.
Faith in the future wanting is, at least
In embryo, every weakness, every guilt,
And strong temptation ripens it to birth.

If this life's gain invites him to the deed,
Why not his country sold, his father slain?
'Tis virtue to pursue our good supreme,
And his supreme, his only good, is here.
Ambition, avarice, by the wise disdain'd,
Is perfect wisdom while mankind are fools,
And think a turf or tombstone covers all:
These find employment, and provide for sense
A richer pasture and a larger range;
And sense, by right divine, ascends the throne.
When virtue's prize and prospect are no more;
Virtue no more we think the will of Heaven.
Would Heav'n quite beggar Virtue if belov'd?

'Has Virtue charms?'—I grant her heavenly fair;
But if unportion'd, all will Interest wed,
Though that our admiration, this our choice.
The virtues grow on immortality;
That root destroy'd, they wither and expire.
A Deity believ'd will nought avail;
Rewards and punishments make God ador'd,

nature rational implies the power
being bless'd or wretched as we please,
idle Reason would have nought to do,
he that would be barr'd capacity
pain, courts incapacity of bliss.
w'n wills our happiness, allows our doom;
ites us ardently, but not compels:
w'n but persuades, almighty man decrees,
is the maker of immortal fates.
falls by man, if finally he falls;
fall he must, who learns from death alone
dreadful secret,—that he lives for ever.
by this to thee?—thee yet, perhaps, in doubt
econd life? but wherefore doubtful still?
nal life is Nature's ardent wish:
it ardently we wish we soon believe:
tardy faith declares that wish destroy'd:
it has destroy'd it?—shall I tell thee what?
n fear'd the future, 'tis no longer wish'd;
when unwish'd, we strive to disbelieve.
us infidelity our guilt betrays.'

that the sole detection! Blush, Lorenzo!
sh for hypocrisy, if not for guilt.
future fear'd?—An infidel, and fear?
what? a dream? a fable?—How thy dread,
villing evidence, and therefore strong,
ords my cause an undesign'd support?
Disbelief affirms what it denies!
unawares, asserts immortal life.'—
rising! infidelity turns out
reed and a confession of our sins:
states, thus, are orthodox divines.
renzo! with Lorenzo clash no more,
longer a transparent vizor wear.
k'st thou Religion only has her mask?
infidels are Satan's hypocrites,
end the worst, and, at the bottom, fail.
n visited by thought (thought will intrude)
him they serve, they tremble, and believe.
here hypocrisy so foul as this?

A miracle with miracles inclos'd
Is man! and starts his faith at what
What less than wonders from the w
What less than miracles from God e
Admit a God—that mystery suprem
That cause uncaus'd! all other wond
Nothing is marvellous for him to do
Deny him—all is mystery besides;
Millions of mysteries! each darker t
Than that thy wisdom would, unwis
If weak thy faith, why choose the b
We nothing know but what is marve
Yet what is marvellous we can't bel
So weak our reason, and so great ou
What most surprises in the sacred p
Or full as strange, or stranger, must
Faith is not reason's labour, but rep

To faith and virtue why so backw
From hence;—the present strongly si
The future, faintly: can we, then, b
If men, Lorenzo! the reverse is righ
Reason is man's peculiar; sense the
The present is the scanty realm of S
The future Reason's empire unconfir
On that expending all her godlike p
She plans, provides, expatiates, triu
There builds her blessings! there exp
And nothing asks of Fortune or of r
And what is Reason? be she thus de
Reason is upright stature in the sou
Oh! be a man,—and strive to be a g

‘For what? (thou say'st) to damp the
No; to give heart and substance to t
That tyrant, Hope, mark how she do
She bids us quit realities for dreams
Safety and peace for hazard and also
That tyrant o'er the tyrants of the s
She bids Ambition quit its taken pr
Spurn the luxuriant branch on whic
Though bearing crowns, to spring at

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. 159

And plunge in toils and dangers—for repose.
If hope precarious, and of things, when gain'd,
Of little moment and as little stay,
Can sweeten toils and dangers into joys,
What then that hope which nothing can defeat,
Our leave unask'd? rich hope of boundless bliss!
Bliss past man's pow'r to paint it, time's to close!

This hope is earth's most estimable prize;
This is man's portion, while no more than man:
Hope, of all passions, most befriends us here;
Passions of prouder name befriend us less.
Joy has her tears, and Transport has her death:
Hope, like a cordial, innocent, through strong,
Man's heart, at once, inspirits and serenes,
Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys:
"Tis all our present state can safely bear,
Health to the frame! and vigour to the mind!
A joy attemper'd! a chas'tis'd delight!
Like the fair summer-evening, mild, and sweet!
"Tis man's full cup, his paradise below!

A bless'd hereafter, then, or hop'd or gain'd,
Is all,—our whole of happiness: full proof
I chose no trivial or inglorious theme.
And know, ye foes to song! (well-manning men,
Though quite forgotten * half your Bible's praise!)
Important truths, in spite of verse, may please:
Grave minds you praise, nor can you praise too much.
If there is weight in an eternity,
Let the grave listen,—and be graver still.

* The poetical parts of it.

THE
Complaint.

NIGHT VIII.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY :

OR,

THE MAN OF THE WORLD ANSWERED.

In which are considered, the Love of this Life; the Ambition and pleasure, with the Wit and Wisdom, of the World.

AND has all Nature, then, espous'd my part?
Have I brib'd Heav'n and Earth to plead against
And is thy soul immortal?—What remains? [thee?
All, all, Lorenzo!—make immortal bless'd.
Unbless'd immortals!—what can shock us more?
And yet Lorenzo still affects the world;
There stows his treasure; thence his title draws,
Man of the World! (for such thou wouldest be call'd)
And art thou proud of that inglorious style?
Proud of reproach? for a reproach it was,
In ancient days, and Christian,—in an age
When men were men, and not ashamed of Heav'n,
Fir'd their ambition, as it crown'd their joy.
Sprinkled with dews from the Castalian font,
Fain would I rebaptize thee, and confer
A purer spirit, and a nobler name.
Thy fond attachments, fatal and inflam'd,
Point out my path, and dictate to my song.
To thee the world how fair! how strongly strikes
Ambition! and gay Pleasure stronger still!
Thy triple bane! the triple bolt that lays
Thy virtue dead! be these my triple theme;
Nor shall thy wit or wisdom be forgot.

Common the theme, not so the song, if she
My song invokes, Urania! deigns to smile.
The charm that chains us to the world, her foe,
If she dissolves, the man of earth, at once,
Starts from his trance, and sighs for other scenes;
Scenes where these sparks of night, these stars, shall
Unnumber'd suns (for all things, as they are, (shine
The bless'd behold) and, in one glory, pour
Their blended blaze on man's astonish'd sight;
A blaze—the least illustrious object there.

Lorenzo! since eternal is at hand,
To swallow time's ambitions, as the vast
Leviathan the bubbles vain that ride
High on the foaming billow, what avail
High titles, high descent, attainments high,
If unattain'd our highest? O Lorenzo!
What lofty thoughts, these elements above,
What towering hopes, what sallies from the sun,
What grand surveys of destiny divine,
And pompous presage of unfathom'd fate,
Should roll in bosoms where a spirit burns,
Bound for eternity! in bosoms read
By him who foibles in archangels sees!
On human hearts he bends a jealous eye,
And marks, and in Heaven's register enrols,
The rise and progress of each option there;
Sacred to Doomsday! that the page unfolds,
And spreads us to the gaze of gods and men.

And what an option, O Lorenzo! thine?
This world! and this, unrivall'd by the skies!
A world where lust of pleasure, grandeur, gold,
Three demons that divide its realms between them,
With strokes alternate buffet to and fro
Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball,
Till, with the giddy circle sick and tir'd,
It pants for peace, and drops into despair.
Such is the world Lorenzo sets above
That glorious promise angels were esteem'd
Too mean to bring; a promise their Ador'd
Descended to communicate, and press,

By counsel, miracle, life, death, on man.
Such is the world Lorenzo's wisdom wooes
And on its thorny pillow seeks repose;
A pillow which, like opiates ill-prepar'd,
Intoxicates, but not composes; fills
The visionary mind with gay chimeras,
All the wild trash of sleep, without the re
What unfeign'd travel, and what dreams o

How frail men, things! how momentary
Fantastic chase of shadows hunting shades
The gay, the busy, equal, though unlike;
Equal in wisdom, differently wise!

Through flowery meadows, and through drear,
One bustling, and one dancing, into death
There's not a day but, to the man of thou
Betrays some secret that throws new repro
On life, and makes him sick of seeing mor
The scenes of business tell us—' What are
The scenes of pleasure—' What is all besid
There others we despise; and here ourselve
Amid disgust eternal dwells delight?—

'Tis approbation strikes the string of joy.

What wondrous prize has kindled this ca
Stuns with the din, and chokes us with the
On life's gay stage, one inch above the gra
The proud run up and down in quest of e
The sensual in pursuit of something worse
The grave of gold; the politic of power;
And all of other butterflies as vain!

As eddies draw things frivolous and light,
How is man's heart by vanity drawn in!
On the swift circle of returning toys
Whirl'd, straw-like, round and round, and
Where gay delusion darkens to despair!

' This is a beaten track.'—Is this a track
Should not be beaten? never beat enough,
Till enough learn'd the truths it would in
Shall Truth be silent, because Folly frown
Turn the world's history, what find we the
But Fortune's sports, or Nature's cruel cli

Or woman's artifice, or man's revenge,
And endless inhumanities on man?
Fame's trumpet seldom sounds but, like the knell,
It brings bad tidings: how it hourly blows
Man's misadventures round the list'ning world!
Man is the tale of narrative old Time;
Sad tale, which high as Paradise begins;
As if, the toil of travel to delude,
From stage to stage, in his eternal round,
The Days, his daughters, as they spin our hours
On Fortune's wheel, where accident unthought
Oft, in a moment, snaps life's strongest thread,
Each, in her turn, some tragic story tells,
With now-and-then a wretched farce between,
And fills his chronicle with human woes.

Time's daughters, true as those of men, deceive us;
Not one but puts some cheat on all mankind.
While in their father's bosom, not yet ours,
They flatter our fond hopes, and promise much
Of amiable, but hold him not o'erwise
Who dares to trust them, and laugh round the year,
At still-confiding, still-confounded, man,
Confiding though confounded; hoping on,
Untaught by trial, unconvinc'd by proof,
And ever looking for the never-seen.
Life to the last, like harden'd felons, lies,
Nor owns itself a cheat till it expires;
Its little joys go out by one and one,
And leave poor man, at length, in perfect night;
Night darker than what now involves the pole.

O thou, who dost permit these ills to fall,
For gracious ends, and wouldst that man should mourn!
O thou, whose hands this goodly fabric fram'd,
Who know'st it best, and wouldst that man should
What is this sublunary world? a vapour; (know!
A vapour all it holds; itself a vapour;
From the damp bed of Chaos, by thy beam
Exhal'd, ordain'd to swim its destin'd hour
In ambient air, then melt and disappear.
Earth's days are number'd, nor remote her doom:

As mortal, though less transient, than her sons:
Yet they dote on her as the world and they
Were both eternal, solid, thou a dream.

They dote on what? immortal views apart,
A region of outsides! a land of shadows!
A fruitful field of flowery promises!
A wilderness of joys! perplex'd with doubts,
And sharp with thorns! a troubled ocean, spread
With bold adventurers, their all on board;
No second hope, if here their fortune frowns;
Frown soon it must. Of various rates they sail,
Of ensigns various; all alike in this,
All restless, auxious, toss'd with hopes and fears
In calmest skies; obnoxious all to storm,
And stormy the most general blast of life:
All bound for happiness; yet few provide
The chart of Knowledge, pointing where it lies,
Or Virtue's helm, to shape the course design'd:
All, more or less, capricious Fate lament,
Now lifted by the tide, and now resorb'd,
And farther from their wishes than before:
All, more or less, against each other dash,
To mutual hurt, by gusts of passion, driven,
And suffering more from folly than from Fate.

Ocean! thou dreadful and tumultuous home
Of dangers, at eternal war with man!
Death's capital, where most he domineers,
With all his chosen terrors frowning round,
(Though lately feasted high at Albion's cost!)
Wide-opening, and loud-roaring still for more!
Too faithful mirror! how dost thou reflect
The melancholy face of human life!
The strong resemblance tempts me farther still:
And, haply, Britain may be deeper struck
By moral truth, in such a mirror seen,
Which Nature holds for ever at her eye.

Self-flatter'd, unexperienc'd, high in hope,
When young, with sanguine cheer and streamers gay,

* Admiral Balchen, &c.

We cut our cable, launch into the world,
And fondly dream each wind and star our friend:
All in some darling enterprise embark'd;
But where is he can fathom its event?
Amid a multitude of artless hands,
Ruin's sure perquisite! her lawful prize!
Some steer aright, but the black blast blows hard,
And puffs them wide of hope: with hearts of proof,
Full against wind and tide, some win their way,
And when strong Effort has deserv'd the port,
And tugg'd it into view, 'tis won! 'tis lost!
Though strong their oar, still stronger is their fate:
They strike! and, while they triumph, they expire.
In stress of weather most, some sink outright;
O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close;
To-morrow knows not they were ever born,
Others a short memorial leave behind,
Like a flag floating, when the bark's ingulf'd;
It floats a moment, and is seen no more.
One Cæsar lives; a thousand are forgot.
How few, beneath auspicious planets born,
(Darlings of Providence! fond Fate's elect!)
With swelling sails make good the promis'd port,
With all their wishes freighted! yet e'en these,
Freighted with all their wishes, soon complain;
Free from misfortune, not from Nature free,
They still are men; and when is man secure?
As fatal time as storm! the rush of years
Beats down their strength; their numberless escapes
In ruin end. And now their proud success
But plants new terrors on the victor's brow:
What pain to quit the world, just made their own,
Their nest so deeply down'd, and built so high!
Too low they build who build beneath the stars.
Woe then apart (if woe apart can be
From mortal man) and Fortune at our nod,
The gay! rich! great! triumphant! and august!
What are they?—The most happy (strange to say)
Convince me most of human misery.
What are they? smiling wretches of to-morrow!

More wretched, then, than e'er their slave can be,
Their treacherous blessings, at the day of need,
Like other faithless friends, unmask and sting:

Then what provoking indigence in wealth!

What aggravated impotence in power!

High titles, then, what insult of their pain!

If that sole anchor, equal to the waves,

Immortal Hope! defies not the rude storm,

Takes comfort from the foaming billow's rage,

And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.

Is this a sketch of what thy soul admires?—

* But here (thou say'st) the miseries of life

Are huddled in a group: a more distinct

Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news.

Look on life's stages; they speak plainer still;

The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou sigh.

Look on thy lovely boy; in him behold

The best that can befall the best on earth;

The boy has virtue by his mother's side:

Yes, on Florello look: a father's heart

Is tender, though the man's is made of stone:

The truth, through such a medium seen, may make

Impression deep, and fondness prove thy friend.

Florello lately cast on this rude coast

A helpless infant, now a heedless child.

To poor Clarissa's throes thy care succeeds;

Care full of love, and yet severe as hate!

O'er thy soul's joy how oft thy fondness frowns!

Needful austerities his will restrain,

As thorns fence in the tender plant from harm.

As yet his reason cannot go alone,

But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.

His little heart is often terrified;

The blush of morning, in his cheek, turns pale;

Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye,

His harmless eye! and drowns an angel there.

Ah! what avails his innocence? the task

Enjoin'd must discipline his early powers;

He learns to sigh ere he is known to sin;

Guiltless, and sad! a wretch before the fall!

How cruel this! more cruel to forbear.
Our nature such, with necessary pains
We purchase prospects of precarious peace:
Though not a father, this might steal a sigh.

Suppose him disciplin'd aright (if not,
'Twill sink our poor account to poorer still!)
Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,
He leaps inclosure, bounds into the world;
The world is taken, after ten years' toil,
Like ancient Troy, and all its joys his own.
Alas! the world's a tutor more severe,
Its lessons hard, and ill deserve his pains;
Unteaching all his virtuous Nature taught,
Or books (fair Virtue's advocates!) inspir'd.

For who receives him into public life?
Men of the world, the terræ-filial breed,
Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,
(Which glitter'd long, at distance, in his sight)
And in their hospitable arms inclose;
Men who think nought so strong of the romance,
So rank knight-errant, as a real friend;
Men that act up to Reason's golden rule,
All weakness of affection quite subdued;
Men that would blush at being thought sincere,
And feign, for glory, the few faults they want;
That love a lie, where truth would pay as well,
As if, to them, Vice shone her own reward.

Lorenzo! canst thou bear a shocking sight?
Such, for Florello's sake, 'twill now appear.
See the steel'd files of season'd veterans,
Train'd to the world, in burnish'd falsehood bright;
Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace,
All soft sensation, in the throng, rubb'd off;
All their keen purpose in politeness sheath'd;
His friends eternal—during interest;
His foes implacable—when worth their while;
At war with every welfare but their own;
As wise as Lucifer, and half as good;
And by whom none but Lucifer, can gain—
Naked through these, (so common Fate ordains)

Naked of heart, his cruel course he runs,
Stung out of all most amiable in life,
Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles up
Affection, as his species wide diffus'd,
Noble presumptions to mankind's renown,
Ingenuous trust, and confidence of love.

These claims to joy (if mortals joy might)
Will cost him many a sigh, till time and
From the slow mistress of this school, Ex-
And her assistant, pausing, pale Distrust,
Purchase a dear-bought clue to lead his way
Through serpentine obliquities of life,
And the dark labyrinth of human hearts.
And happy! if the clue shall come so cheap
For while we learn to fence with public g-
Full oft we feel its foul contagion too,
If less than heavenly virtue is our guard.
Thus a strange kind of curs'd necessity
Brings down the sterling temper of his soul
By base alloy, to bear the current stamp,
Below call'd Wisdom; sinks him into safe-
And brands him into credit with the world
Where spacious titles dignify disgrace,
And Nature's injuries are arts of life;
Where brighter reason prompts to bolder
And heavenly talents make infernal hearts
That unsurmountable extreme of guilt!

Poor Machiavel! who labour'd hard his plan,
Forgot that Genius need not go to school;
Forgot that man, without a tutor wise,
His plan had practis'd long before 'twas w-
The world's all title-page; there's no cont-
The world's all face: the man who shows
Is hooted for his nudities, and scorn'd.
A man I knew who liv'd upon a smile,
And well it fed him; he look'd plump and
While rankest venom foam'd through ever.
Lorenzo! what I tell thee take not ill!
Living, he fawn'd on every fool alive;
And, dying, curs'd the friend on whom he

To such proficients thou art half a saint.
 In foreign realms (for thou hast travell'd far)
 How curious to contemplate two state-rooks,
 Studious their nests to feather in a trice,
 With all the necromantics of their art,
 Playing the game of faces on each other,
 Making court sweetmeats of their latent gall,
 In foolish hope to steal each other's trust;
 Both cheating, both exulting, both deceiv'd,
 And, sometimes, both (let earth rejoice) undone!
 Their parts we doubt not, but be that their shame,
 Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,
 Stoop to mean wiles that would disgrace a fool,
 And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve?
 For who can thank the man he cannot see?

Why so much cover? it defeats itself.
 Ye that know all things! know ye not men's hearts
 Are therefore known because they are conceal'd?
 For why conceal'd?—the cause they need not tell.
 I give him joy that's awkward at a lie;
 Whose feeble nature Truth keeps still in awe;
 His incapacity is his renown.
 'Tis great, 'tis manly, to disdain disguise;
 It shows our spirit, or it proves our strength.
 Thou say'st 'tis needful! is it therefore right?
 Howe'er, I grant it some small sign of grace
 To strain at an excuse: and wouldest thou then,
 Escape that cruel need? thou may'st with ease;
 Think no post needful that demands a knave.
 When late our Civil helm was shifting hands,
 So Pelham thought: think better if you can.

But this how rare! the public path of life
 Is dirty:—yet allow that dirt its due,
 It makes the noble mind more noble still.
 The world's no neuter; it will wound or save;
 Our virtue quench, or indignation fire.
 You say the world, well-known, will make a man.—
 The world, well-known, will give our hearts to Heav'n,
 Or make us demons, long before we die.

To show how fair the world, thy mistress, shines,

Take either part, sure ills attend the c
Sure, though not equal, detriment ens
Not Virtue's self is deified on earth;
Virtue has her relapses, conflicts, foes
Foes that ne'er fail to make her feel t
Virtue has her peculiar set of pains.
True friends to virtue last and least c
But if they sigh, can others hope to st
If Wisdom has her miseries to mourn,
How can poor Folly lead a happy life
And if both suffer, what has earth to l
Where he most happy who the least la
Where much, much patience, the most
And some forgiveness, needs, the best
For friend or happy life who looks not
Of neither shall he find the shadow he

The world's sworn advocate, without
Lorenzo smartly, with a smile, replies
'Thus far thy song is right, and all m
Virtue has her peculiar set of pains:—
And joys peculiar who to Vice denies:
If vice it is with nature to comply:
If pride and sense are so predominant
To check, not overcome them, makes a
Can Nature in a plainer voice proclaim
Pleasure and glory the chief good of n
Can pride and sensuality rejoice?
From purity of thought all pleasure sp
And from an humble spirit all our pea
Ambition, Pleasure! let us talk of thes
Of these the Porch and Academy talk'd
Of these each following age had much
Yet unexhausted, still, the needful the
Who talks of these, to mankind all at e
He talks; for where the saint from eit
Are these thy refuge?—No; these rush
Thy vitals seize, and, vulture-like, dev
I'll try if I can pluck thee from thy re
Prometheus! from this barren ball of e
If reason can unchain thee, thou art fr

And first, thy Caucasus, Ambition, calls;
Mountain of torments! eminence of woes!
Of courted woes! and courted through mistake!
'Tis not ambition charms thee! 'tis a cheat
Will make thee start, as H—— at his Moor.
Dost grasp at greatness? first know what it is,
Think'st thou thy greatness in distinction lies?
Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,
By Fortune stuck, to mark us from the throng,
Is glory lodg'd: 'tis lodg'd in the reverse;
In that which joins, in that which equals all.
The monarch and his slave,—' a deathless soul,
Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,
A Father-God, and brothers in the skies;
Elder, indeed, in time, but less remote
In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man.
Why greater what can fall than what can rise?

If still delirious, now, Lorenzo! go,
And, with thy full-blown brothers of the world,
Throw scorn around thee; cast it on thy slaves,
Thy slaves and equals. How scorn cast on them
Rebounds on thee! If man is mean, as man,
Art thou a god? if Fortune makes him so,
Beware the consequence: a maxim that
Which draws a monstrous picture of mankind,
Where, in the drapery, the man is lost;
Externals fluttering, and the soul forgot.
Thy greatest glory, when dispos'd to boast,
Boast that aloud in which thy servants share.

We wisely strip the steed we mean to buy.
Judge we, in their caparisons of men?
It nought avails thee where, but what, thou art.
All the distinctions of this little life
Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the man, [creep,
When through Death's streights earth's subtle serpents
Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,
As crooked Satan the forbidden tree,
They leave their party-colour'd robe behind,
All that now glitters, while they rear aloft
Their brazen crests, and hiss at us below.

Though various are the tempers of me
Pleasure's gay family holds all in chair
Some most affect the black, and some the white;
Some honest pleasure court, and some obscene.
Pleasures obscene are various, as the things
Of passions that can err in human heart;
Mistake their objects, or transgress their law:
Think you there's but one whoredom? who
But when our reason licenses delight.
Dost doubt, Lorenzo? thou shalt doubt no more,
Thy father chides thy gallantries, yet he loves
An ugly, common harlot in the dark,
A rank adulterer with others' gold;
And that hag, Vengeance, in a corner of the world,
Hatred her brothrel has, as well as Love.
Where horrid epicures debauch in blood,
Whate'er the motive, Pleasure is the main;—
For her the black assassin draws his swart sword,
For her dark statesmen trim their midshipmen
To which no single sacrifice may fall;
For her the saint abstains, the miser still
The stoic proud, for Pleasure, pleasure takes;
For her Affliction's daughters grief instead,
And find, or hope, a luxury in tears;
For her guilt, shame, toil, danger, weep instead,
And, with an aim voluptuous, rush on
Thus universal her despotic power.

And as her empire wide, her praise is great,
Patron of Pleasure! Doter on delight!
I am thy rival; pleasure I profess;
Pleasure the purpose of my gloomy son,
Pleasure is nought but Virtue's gayer name;
I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low,
Virtue the root, and pleasure is the flower;
And honest Epicurus' foes were fools.

But this sounds harsh, and gives the world pain;
If o'erstrain'd wisdom still retains the wits,
How knits Austerity her cloudy brow,
And blames, as bold and hazardous, the course
Of pleasure, to mankind uprais'd, too drowsy.

Ye modern stoics! hear my soft reply;
Their senses men will trust: we can't impose,
Or, if we could, is imposition right?
Own honey sweet; but, owning, add this sting,
'When mix'd with poison it is deadly too.'
Truth never was indebted to a lie.
Is nought but virtue to be prais'd as good?
Why then is health preferr'd before disease?
What Nature loves is good, without our leave;
And where no future drawback cries, 'Beware,'
Pleasure, though not from virtue, should prevail:
'Tis balm to life, and gratitude to Heav'n,
How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd!
The love of Pleasure is man's eldest born,
Born in his cradle, living to his tomb;
Wisdom, her younger sister, though more grave,
Was meant to minister, and not to mar,
Imperial Pleasure, queen of human hearts.

Lorenzo! thou, her majesty's renown'd,
Though uncoift counsel, learned in the world!
Who think'st thyself a Murray, with disdain
May'st look on me: yet, my Demosthenes!
Canst thou plead Pleasure's cause as well as I?
Know'st thou her nature, purpose, parentage?
Attend my song, and thou shalt know them all;
And know thyself; and know thyself to be
(Strange truth!) the most abstemious man alive.
Tell not Calista, she will laugh thee dead,
Or send thee to her hermitage with L—.
Absurd presumption! thou, who never knew'st
A serious thought! shalt thou dare dream of joy?
No man e'er found a happy life by chance,
Or yawn'd it into being with a wish:
Or with the snout of groveling Appetite
E'er smelt it out, and grubbd it from the dirt.
An art it is, and must be learn'd; and learn'd
With unremitting effort, or be lost,
And leaves us perfect blockheads in our bliss.
The clouds may drop down titles and estates;
Wealth may seek us; but wisdom must be sought;

A feign'd affection bounds her utmost p
Some we can't love, but for th' Almighty
A foe to God was ne'er true friend to n
Some sinister intent taints all he does,
And in his kindest actions he's unkind.

On piety humanity is built,
And on humanity much happiness;
And yet still more on piety itself.
A soul in commerce with her God is R
Feels not the tumults and the shocks of
The whirls of passions, and the strokes
A Deity believ'd is joy begun;
A Deity ador'd is joy advanc'd;
A Deity belov'd is joy matur'd.
Each branch of piety delight inspires;
Faith builds a bridge from this world t
O'er Death's dark gulf, and all its horr
Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,
That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter s
Pray'r ardent opens Heav'n, lets down
Of glory on the consecrated hour
Of man, in audience with the Deity.

Who worships the Great God that insta
The first in Heav'n, and sets his foot o

Lorenzo! when wast thou at church l
Thou think'st the service long: but is i
Though just, unwelcome. Thou hadst s
Unhallow'd ground: the Muse, to win
Must take an air less solemn. She com
Good Conscience! at the sound the wor
Verse disaffects it, and Lorenzo smiles;
Yet has she her seraglio full of charms
And such as age shall heighten, not im
Art thou dejected? is thy mind o'ercast
Amid her fair ones thou the fairest cho
To chase thy gloom.—' Go, fix some we
Chain down some passion; do some gen
Teach Ignorance to see, or Grief to sm
Correct thy friend; befriend thy greates
Or, with warm heart and confidence di

Spring up, and lay strong hold on Him who made thee?

Thy gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow,
Though wither'd is thy vine, and harp unstrung.

Dost call the bowl, the viol, and the dance,
Loud mirth, mad laughter? Wretched comforters!

Physicians! more than half of thy disease.

Laughter, though never censur'd yet as sin,

(Pardon a thought that only seems severe)

Is half-immoral: is it much indulg'd?

By venting spleen, or dissipating thought,

It shews a scorner, or it makes a fool,

And sins, as hurting others, or ourselves.

'Tis pride, or emptiness, applies the straw

That tickles little minds to mirth effuse;

Of grief approaching the portentous sign!

The house of laughter makes a house of woe.

A man triumphant is a monstrous sight;

A man dejected is a sight as mean.

What cause for triumph where such ills abound?

What for dejection where presides a power

Who call'd us into being to be bless'd?

So grieve, as conscious grief may rise to joy;

So joy, as conscious joy to grief may fall.

Most true a wise man never will be sad;

But neither will sonorous, bubbling mirth,

A shallow stream of happiness betray;

Too happy to be sportive, he's serene.

Yet wouldest thou laugh (but at thy own expense)

This counsel strange should I presume to give—

'Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay.'

There truths abound of sovereign aid to peace:

Ah! do not prize them less because inspir'd,

As thou and thine are apt and proud to do.

If not inspir'd, that pregnant page had stood,

Time's treasure! and the wonder of the wise!

Thou think'st, perhaps, thy soul alone at stake:

Alas!—should men mistake thee for a fool;—

What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,

Though tender of thy fame, could interpose?

Believe me sense, here, acts a double
And the true critic is a Christian to

But these, thou think'st, are gloom
True joy in sunshine ne'er was foun
They first themselves offend who gr
And travel only gives us sound repe
Heav'n sells all pleasure; effort is t
The joys of conquest are the joys of
And Glory the victorious laurel spr
O'er Pleasure's pure, perpetual, plac

There is a time when toil must be
Or joy, by mistim'd fondness, is un
A man of pleasure is a man of pain
Thou wilt not take the trouble to be
False joys, indeed, are born from wi
From thought's full bent and energy
And that demands a mind in equal
Remote from gloomy grief and glari
Much joy not only speaks small hap
But happiness that shortly must exp
Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, st
And, in a tempest, can reflection liv
Can joy, like thine, secure itself an
Can joy, like thine, meet accident u
Or ope the door to honest poverty?
Or talk with threatening Death, and

In such a world, and such a nature,

Are needful fundamentals of deligh

These fundamentals give delight inc

Delight pure, delicate, and durable;

Delight unshaken, masculine, divine

A constant and a sound, but serious

Is Joy the daughter of Severity?

It is:—yet far my doctrine from sev

‘Rejoice for ever:’ it becomes a ma

Exalts, and sets him nearer to the g

‘Rejoice for ever,’ Nature cries; ‘I

And drinks to man in her nectareou

Mix'd up of delicates for every sens

To the great Founder of the bounte

VIII. VIRTUE'S APOLOGY.

181

s glory, gratitude, eternal praise;
he that will not pledge her is a churl.
nly to support, good fully taste,
whole science of felicity:
aring pledge; her bowl is not the best
nd can boast.—'A rational repast,
on, vigilance, a mind in arms,
itary discipline of thought,
l temptation in the doubtful field,
ver-waking ardour for the right.'
ese first give, then guard, a cheerful heart,
t that is right think little, well aware
Reason bids, God bids; by his command
iggrandiz'd the smallest thing we do!
nothing is insipid to the wise;
e insipid all but what is mad,
eason'd high, and tasting strong of guilt.
d! (thou reply'st, with indignation fir'd)
cient sages proud to tread the steps,
w Nature.'—Follow Nature still,
ok it be thine own. Is Conscience, then,
rt of Nature? Is she not supreme?
regicide! O raise her from the dead!
follow Nature, and resemble God.
n, spite of conscience, pleasure is pursued,
nature is unnaturally pleas'd;
what's unnatural is painful too
tervals, and must disgust ev'n thee!
ct thou know'st; but not, perhaps, the cause.
s foundations with the world's were laid:
u mix'd her with our make, and twisted close
cred interests with the strings of life:
breaks her awful mandate shocks himself,
stter self: and is it greater pain
oul should murmur, or our dust repine?
me, in their eternal war, must bleed.
e must suffer, which should least be spar'd?
ains of mind surpass the pains of sense:
then, the Gout, what torment is in guilt?—
oys of sense to mental joys are mean:

Sense on the present only feeds; t
On past and future forages for joy
'Tis her's, by retrospect, through
And forward time's great sequel t
Could human courts take vengeance
Axes might rust, and racks and g
Guard then thy mind, and leave t

Lorenzo? wilt thou never be a m
The man is dead who for the bod
Lur'd by the beating of his pulse,
With every lust that wars against
And sets him quite at variance w
Thyself first know, then love: a se
Of virtue fond, that kindles at he
A self there is as fond of every v
While every virtue wounds it to t
Humility degrades it, Justice robs
Bless'd Bounty beggars it, fair Tr
And godlike Magnanimity destroy
This self, when rival to the forme
When not in competition, kindly t
Defend it, feed it:—but when Virt
Toss it or to the fowls or to the fi
And why? 'tis love of pleasure bid
Comply, or own self-love extinct,

For what is vice? self-love in a s
A poor blind merchant buying joy
And virtue what? 'tis self-love in l
Quite skilful in the market of deli
Self-love's good sense is love of th
From whom herself, and all she ca
Other self-love is but disguis'd self
More mortal than the malice of ou
A self-hate now scarce felt, then fe
When being curs'd, extinction lou
And every thing preferr'd to what

Yet this self-love Lorenzo makes
And, in this choice triumphant, bo
How is his want of happiness betr
By disaffection to the present hour

Night VIII. VIRTUE's APOLOGY.

183

Imagination wanders far a-field;
The future pleases: why? the present pains.—
‘But that’s a secret.’—Yes, which all men know,

And know from thee, discover’d unawares.

Thy ceaseless agitation, restless rolls
From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause.
What is it?—’Tis the cradle of the soul,
From Instinct sent, to rock her in disease,
Which her physician, Reason, will not cure.
A poor expedient! yet thy best; and while
It mitigates thy pain, it owns it too.

Such are Lorenzo’s wretched remedies!
The weak have remedies, the wise have joys,
Superior wisdom is superior bliss.
And what sure mark distinguishes the wise?
Consistent wisdom ever wills the same;
Thy fickle wish is ever on the wing.
Sick of herself is Folly’s character,
As Wisdom’s is a modest self-applause.
A change of evils is thy good supreme,
Nor but in motion canst thou find thy rest.
Man’s greatest strength is shown in standing still.
The first sure symptom of a mind in health
Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home.
False Pleasure from abroad her joys imports;
Rich from within, and self-sustain’d, the true.
The true is fix’d and solid as a rock;
Slippery the false, and tossing as the wave.
This a wild wanderer on earth, like Cain;
That like the fabled, self-enamour’d boy,
Home-contemplation her supreme delight:
She dreads an interruption from without,
Smit with her own condition, and the more
Intense she gazes, still it charms the more.

No man is happy till he thinks on earth
There breathes not a more happy than himself;
Then envy dies, and love o’erflows on all;
And love o’erflowing makes an angel here.
Such angels all entitled to repose

I

On Him who governs fate. Though tempest frowns,
Though Nature shakes, how soft to lean on Heav'n!
To lean on him on whom archangels lean!
With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,
They stand collecting every beam of thought,
Till their hearts kindle with divine delight;
For all their thoughts, like angels, seen of old
In Israel's dream, come from, and go to Heav'n;
Hence are they studious of sequester'd scenes,
While noise and dissipation comfort thee.

Were all men happy, revellings would cease,
That opiate for inquietude within.
Lorenzo! never man was truly bless'd,
But it compos'd and gave him such a cast.
As Folly might mistake for want of joy:
A cast unlike the triumph of the proud;
A modest aspect, and a smile at heart.
O for a joy from thy Philander's spring!
A spring perennial, rising in the breast,
And permanent as pure! no turbid stream
Of rapturous exultation, swelling high,
Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour a while
Then sink at once, and leave us in the mire.
What does the man who transient joy prefers?
What but prefer the bubbles to the stream?

Vain are all sudden sallies of delight,
Convulsions of a weak distemper'd joy.
Joy's a fix'd state; a tenure, not a start.
Bliss there is none but unprecarius bliss:
That is the gem: sell all, and purchase that.
Why go a-begging to contingencies,
Not gain'd with ease, nor safely lov'd if gain'd?
At good fortuitous draw back, and pause;
Suspect it; what thou canst ensure enjoy;
And nought but what thou giv'st thyself is sure.
Reason perpetuates joy that reason gives,
And makes it as immortal as herself:
To mortals nought immortal but their worth.

Worth, conscious Worth! should absolutely reign,
And other joys ask leave for their approach,

Nor unexamin'd ever leave obtain.
Thou art all anarchy; a mob of joys
Wage war, and perish in intestine broils;
Not the least promise of internal peace!
No bosom-comfort! or unborrow'd bliss!
Thy thoughts are vagabonds; all out-ward-bound
'Mid sands, and rocks, and storms, to cruise for pleasure;
If gain'd, dear-bought; and better miss'd than gain'd.
Much pain must expiate what much pain procur'd.
Fancy and sense, from an infected shore,
Thy cargo bring, and pestilence the prize.
Then such thy thirst, (insatiable thirst
By fond indulgence but inflam'd the more)
Fancy still cruises, when poor Sense is tir'd.

Imagination is the Paphian shop
Where feeble Happiness, like Vulcan, lame,
Bids foul ideas, in their dark recess,
And hot as hell (which kindled the black fires)
With wanton art those fatal arrows form,
Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.
Wouldst thou receive them, other thoughts there are
On angel-wing, descending from above,
Which these, with art divine, would counter-work,
And form celestial armour for thy peace.

In this is seen Imagination's guilt,
But who can count her follies? she betrays thee,
To think in grandeur there is something great.
For works of curious art, and ancient fame,
Thy genius hungers, elegantly pain'd,
And foreign climes must cater for thy taste.
Hence what disaster!—Though the price was paid.
That persecuting priest, the Turk of Rome,
Whose foot, (ye gods!) though cloven must be kiss'd,
Detain'd thy dinner on the Latian shore;
(Such is the fate of honest protestants!)
And poor Magnificence is starv'd to death.
Hence just resentment, indignation, ire!—
Be pacified; if outward things are great,
'Tis magnanimity great things to scorn;
Pompous expenses, and parades august,

And courts, that insalubrious soil to
True happiness ne'er enter'd at an ey
True happiness resides in things uns
No smiles of Fortune ever bless'd th
Nor can her frowns rob Innocence o
That jewel wanting, triple crowns ar
So tell his Holiness, and be reveng'd

Pleasure, we both agree, is man's o
Our only contest what deserves the s
Give Pleasure's name to nought but i
Th' authentic seal of Reason (which,
Demurs on what it passes) and defies
The tooth of Time; when past, a ple
Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
And doubly to be priz'd, as it prome
Our future, while it forms our presen
Some joys the future overcast, and s
Throw all their beams that way, and
Some joys endear eternity; some giv
Abhor'd Annihilation dreadful char
Are rival joys contending for thy cl
Consult thy whole existence, and be
That oracle will put all doubt to flig
Short is the lesson, though my lectu
Be good—and let Heav'n answer for

Yet, with a sigh o'er all mankind,
In this our day of proof, our land o
The good man has his clouds that in
Clouds that obscure his sublunary di
But never conquer; ev'n the best m
Patience and resignation are the pill
Of human peace on earth: the pillar
But those of Seth not more remote f
Till this heroic lesson thou hast lear
To frown at pleasure, and to smile i
Fir'd at the prospect of unclouded bl
Heav'n in reversion, like the sun, as
Beneath th' horizon, cheers us in thi
It sheds, on souls susceptible of ligh
The glorious dawn of our eternal da

' This (says Lorenzo) is a fair harangue :
But can harangues blow back strong Nature's stream,
Or stem the tide Heav'n pushes through our veins,
Which sweeps away man's impotent resolves,
And lays his labour level with the world ?'

Themselves men make their comment on mankind,
And think nought is but what they find at home :
Thus weakness to chimera turns the truth.
Nothing romantic has the Muse prescrib'd :
Above,* Lorenzo saw the man of earth,
The mortal man, and wretched was the sight.
To balance that, to comfort and exalt,
Now see the man immortal ; him, I mean,
Who lives as such ; whose heart, full-bent on Heav'n,
Leans all that way, his bias to the stars.
The world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise
His lustre more, though bright, without a foil :
Observe his awful portrait, and admire ;
Nor stop at wonder ; imitate, and live.

Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,
What nothing less than angel can exceed,
A man on earth devoted to the skies ;
Like ships in seas, while in, above the world.

With aspect mild, and elevated eye,
Behold him seated on a mount serene,
Above the fogs of sense, and passion's storm ;
All the black cares and tumults of this life,
Like harmless thunders, breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.
Earth's genuine sons, the sceptred and the slave,
A mingled mob ! a wandering herd ! he sees,
Bewilder'd in the vale ; in all unlike !
His full reverse in all ! what higher praise ?
What stronger demonstration of the right ?

The present all their care, the future his.
When public welfare calls, or private want,
They give to Fame ; his bounty he conceals,
Their virtues varnish Nature, his exalt.

* In a former Night.

His true existence is not yet begun.

His glorious course was, yesterday, complete;
Death then was welcome; yet life still is sweet.

But nothing charms Lorenzo like the firm,
Undaunted breast.—And whose is that high praise?
They yield to pleasure, though they danger brave,
And shew no fortitude but in the field;
If there they shew it, 'tis for glory shown,
Nor will that cordial always man their hearts.
A cordial his sustains that cannot fail:
By pleasure unsubdued, unbroke by pain,
He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts;
All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls,
And when he falls writes *Vici* on his shield.
From magnanimity all fear above;
From nobler recompense above applause,
Which owes to man's short outlook all its charms.

Backward to credit what he never felt,
Lorenzo cries,—' Where shines this miracle?
From what root rises this immortal man?—
A root that grows not in Lorenzo's ground:
The root dissect, nor wonder at the flower.

He follows Nature (not like thee*) and shows us
An uninverted system of a man.
His appetite wears Reason's golden chain,
And finds, in due restraint, its luxury.
His passion, like an eagle well reclaim'd,
Is taught to fly at nought but infinite.
Patient his hope, unauxious is his care,
His caution fearless, and his grief (if grief
The gods ordain) a stranger to despair.
And why?—because affection, more than meet,
His wisdom leaves not disengag'd from Heav'n.
Those secondary goods that smile on earth
He, loving in proportion, loves in peace.
They most the world enjoy who least admire.
His understanding 'scapes the common cloud
Of fumes arising from a boiling breast.

* See Night the Eighth, p. 181.

His head is clear, because his heart is cool,
By worldly competitions uninflam'd.
The moderate movements of his soul admit
Distinct ideas, and matur'd debate,
An eye impartial, and an even scale :
Whence judgment sound, and unrepenting choice.
Thus, in a double sense, the good are wise ;
On its own dunghill wiser than the world.
What, then, the world ? it must be doubly weak,
Strange truth ! as soon would they believe their creed.

Yet, thus it is, nor otherwise can be,
So far from aught romantic what I sing,
Bliss has no being, Virtue has no strength,
But from the prospect of immortal life.
Who think earth all, or (what weighs just the same)
Who care no farther, must prize what it yields,
Fond of its fancies, proud of its parades.
Who thinks earth nothing can't its charms admire ;
He can't a foe, though most malignant, hate,
Because that hate would prove his greater foe.
'Tis hard for them (yet who so loudly boast
Good-will to men?) to love their dearest friend ;
For may not he invade their good supreme,
Where the least jealousy turns love to gall ?
All shines to them, that for a season shines :
Each act, each thought, he questions ; ' What its weight,
Its colour what, a thousand ages hence ?' —
And what it there appears he deems it now ;
Hence pure are the recesses of his soul,
The godlike man has nothing to conceal ;
His virtue, constitutionally deep,
Has Habit's firmness, and Affection's flame ;
Angels, allied, descend to feed the fire,
And death, which others slay, makes him a god.
And now, Lorenzo ! bigot of this world !
Wont to disdain poor bigots caught by Heav'n !
Stand by thy scorn, and be reduc'd to nought !
For what art thou ? — Thou boaster ! while thy glare,
Thy gaudy grandeur, and mere worldly worth,
Like a broad mist, at distance, strikes us most,

And, like a mist, is nothing when at hand;
His merit, like a mountain, on approach,
Swells more, and rises nearer to the skies,
By promise now, and by possession, soon
(Too soon, too much, it cannot be) his own.

From this thy just annihilation rise,
Lorenzo! rise to something, by reply.
The world, thy client, listens and expects,
And longs to crown thee with immortal praise.
Canst thou be silent? no; for wit is thine,
And Wit talks most when least she has to say,
And reason interrupts not her career.
She'll say—that mists above the mountains rise,
And with a thousand pleasantries amuse;
She'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust,
And fly conviction in the dust she rais'd.

Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste!
'Tis precious as the vehicle of sense,
But as its substitute a dire disease.
Pernicious talent! flatter'd by the world,
By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare.
Wisdom is rare, Lorenzo! wit abounds;
Passion can give it; sometimes wine inspires
The lucky flash; and madness rarely fails,
Whatever cause the spirit strongly stirs,
Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.
For thy renown 'twere well was this the worst;
Chance often hits it; and, to pique thee more,
See Dulness, blundering on vivacities,
Shakes her sage head at the calamity
Which has expos'd, and let her down to thee.
But Wisdom, awful Wisdom! which inspects,
Discerns, compares, weighs, separates, infers,
Seizes the right, and holds it to the last,
How rare! in senates, synods, sought in vain;
Or if there found, 'tis sacred to the few;
While a lewd prostitute to multitudes,
Frequent as fatal, Wit. In civil life
Wit makes an enterpriser, sense a man.
Wit hates authority, commotion loves,

And thinks herself the lightning of the storm,
In states 'tis dangerous; in religion death.
Shall Wit turn Christian when the dull believe?
Sense is our helmet, Wit is but the plume;
The plume exposes, 'tis our helmet saves,
Sense is the diamond, weighty, solid, sound;
When cut by Wit it casts a brighter beam;
Yet Wit apart, it is a diamond still.
Wit, widow'd of good sense, is worse than nought;
It hoists more sail to run against a rock,
Thus a half-Chesterfield is quite a fool,
Whom dull fools scorn, and bless their want of wit.

How ruinous the rock I warn thee shun,
Where Sirens sit to sing thee to thy fate!
A joy in which our reason bears no part,
Is but a sorrow, tickling ere it stings.
Let not the cooings of the world allure thee;
Which of her lovers ever found her true?
Happy! of this bad world who little know:—
And yet we much must know her to be safe.
To know the world, not love her, is thy point;
She gives but little, nor that little long.
There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse,
A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy,
Our thoughtless agitation's idle child,
That mantles high, that sparkles, and expires,
Leaving the soul more vapid than before;
An animal ovation! such as holds
No commerce with our reason, but subsists
On juices, through the well-ton'd tubes well strain'd;
A nice machine! scarce ever tun'd aright;
And when it jars—thy sirens sing no more;
Thy dance is done; the demi-god is thrown
(Short apotheosis!) beneath the man,
In coward gloom immers'd, or fell despair.

Art thou yet dull enough despair to dread,
And startle at destruction? if thou art,

Accept a buckler, take it to the field;

(A field of battle is this mortal life!)

When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart,

A single sentence proof against the world.
'Soul, body, fortune! every good pertains
To one of these; but prize not all alike;
The goods of fortune to thy body's health,
Body to soul, and soul submit to God.'

Wouldst thou build lasting happiness? do this:
Th' inverted pyramid can never stand.

Is this truth doubtful? it outshines the sun;
Nay, the sun shines not but to show us this,
The single lesson of mankind on earth:
And yet—yet what? No news! mankind is mad;
Such mighty numbers list against the right,
(And what can't numbers, when bewitch'd, achieve!)
They talk themselves to something like belief
That all earth's joys are theirs; as Athens' fool
Grinn'd from the port on every sail his own.

They grin, but wherefore? and how long the laugh?
Half Ignorance their mirth, and half a lie.
To cheat the world, and cheat themselves, they smile:
Hard either task! the most abandon'd own
That others, if abandon'd, are undone:
Then for themselves, the moment Reason wakes,
(And Providence denies it long repose)
O how laborious is their gaiety!
They scarce can swallow their ebullient spleen,
Scarce muster patience to support the farce.
And pump sad laughter till the curtain falls.
Scarce, did I say! some cannot sit it out;
Oft their own daring hands the curtain draw,
And shew us what their joy by their despair.

The clotted hair! gor'd breast! blaspheming eye!
Its impious fury still alive in death!
Shut, shut the shocking scene.—But Heav'n denies
A cover to such guilt, and so should man.
Look round, Lorenzo! see the reeking blade,
Th' envenom'd phial, and the fatal ball;
The strangling cord, and suffocating stream;
The loathsome rottenness, and foul decays,
From raging riot, (slower suicides!)
And pride in these, more execrable still!

How horrid all to thought!—but horrors, these,
That vouch the truth, and aid my feeble song.
From vice, sense, fancy, no man can be bless'd:
Bliss is too great to lodge within an hour:
When an immortal being aims at bliss,
Duration is essential to the name.
O for a joy from reason! joy from that
Which makes man man, and, exercis'd aright,
Will make him more: a bounteous joy! that gives
And promises; that weaves, with art divine,
The richest prospect into present peace;
A joy ambitious! joy in common held
With thrones ethereal, and their greater far:
A joy high-privileg'd from chance, time, death!
A joy which death shall double, judgment crown!
Crown'd higher, and still higher, at each stage,
Through bless'd eternity's long day, yet still
Not more remote from sorrow than from him
Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours
So much of Deity on guilty dust.
There, O my Lucia! may I meet thee there,
Where not thy presence can improve my bliss!
Affects not this the sages of the world?
Can nought affect them, but what fools them too?
Eternity depending on an hour,
Makes serious thought man's wisdom, joy, and praise,
Nor need you blush (though sometimes your designs
May shun the light) at your designs on Heaven;
Sole point! where overbashful is your blame.
Are you not wise?—you know you are: yet hear
One truth, amid your numerous schemes mislaid,
Or overlook'd, or thrown aside, if seen;
‘Our schemes to plan by this world or the next,
Is the sole difference between wise and fool.’
All worthy men will weigh you in this scale:
What wonder, then, if they pronounce you light?
Is their esteem alone not worth your care?
Accept my simple scheme of common sense,
Thus save your fame, and make two worlds your own.
The world replies not;—but the world persists,
And puts the cause off to the longest day,

Planning evasions for the day of doom:
So far, at that re-hearing, from redress,
They then turn witnesses against themselves,
Hear that, Lorenzo! nor be wise to-morrow.
Haste, haste! a man, by nature, is in haste!
For who shall answer for another hour?
'Tis highly prudent to make one sure friend,
And that thou caust not do this side the skies.

Ye sons of Earth! (nor willing to be more!)
Since verse you think from priestcraft somewhat free,
Thus, in an age so gay, the Muse plain truths
(Truth's which, at church, you might have heard in
Has ventur'd into light, well pleas'd the verse (prose)
Should be forgot, if you the truths retain,
And crown her with your welfare, not your praise.
But praise she need not fear: I see my fate,
And headlong leap, like Curtius, down the gulf,
Since many an ample volume, mighty tome,
Must die, and die unwept; O thou minute,
Devoted page! go forth among thy foes;
Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,
And die a double death: mankind, incens'd,
Denies thee long to live; nor shalt thou rest
When thou art dead, in Stygian shades arraign'd
By Lucifer, as traitor to his throne,
And bold blasphemer of his friend,—the World!
The world, whose legions cost him slender pay,
And volunteers around his banner swarm,
Prudent as Prussia in her zeal for Gaul.

'Are all, then, fools?' Lorenzo cries.—Yes, all
But such as hold this doctrine, (new to thee)
'The mother of true wisdom is the will,'
The noblest intellect, a fool without it.
World-wisdom much has done, and more may do,
In arts and sciences, in wars and peace;
But art and science, like thy wealth, will leave thee,
And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.
This is the most indulgence can afford,—
'Thy wisdom all can do but—make thee wise.'
Nor think this censure is severe on thee;
Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce.

THE
Consolation.

—————
NIGHT IX.
—————

Containing, among other things,

I. AMORAL SURVEY OF THE NOCTURNAL HEAVENS.

II. A NIGHT-ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

Inscribed to his Grace the Duke of Newcastle.

—Fatis contraria Fata rependens.

Virg.

AS when a traveller, a long day past
In painful search of what he cannot find,
At night's approach, content with the next cot,
There ruminates a while his labour lost,
Then cheers his heart with what his fate affords,
And chants his sonnet to deceive the time,
Till the due season calls him to repose;
Thus I, long travell'd in the ways of men,
And dancing, with the rest, the giddy maze,
Where Disappointment smiles at Hope's career,
Warn'd by the langour of life's evening ray.
At length have hous'd me in an humble shed,
Where, future wandering banish'd from my thought,
And waiting, patient, the sweet hour of rest,
I chase the moments with a serious song.
Song soothes our pains, and age has pains to soothe.
When age, care, crime, and friends, embrac'd at heart,
Torn from my bleeding breast, and death's dark shade,
Which hovers o'er me, quench th' ethereal fire,
Canst thou, O Night! indulge one labour more?
One labour more indulge! then sleep, my strain!
Till, haply, wak'd by Raphael's golden lyre.

Where night, death, age, care, crime and sorrow
cease,

To bear a part in everlasting lays ;
Though far, far higher set, in aim, I trust,
Symphonious to this humble prelude here.

Has not the Muse asserted pleasures pure,
Like those above, exploding other joys ?
Weigh what was urg'd, Lorenzo ! fairly weigh,
And tell me, hast thou cause to triumph still ?
I think thou wilt forbear a boast so bold :
But if, beneath the favour of mistake,
Thy smile's sincere, not more sincere can be
Lorenzo's smile than my compassion for him.
The sick in body call for aid ; the sick
In mind are covetous of more disease,
And when at worst, they dream themselves quite well.
To know ourselves diseas'd is half our cure.
When Nature's blush by custom is wip'd off,
And conscience, deaden'd by repeated strokes,
Has into manners naturaliz'd our crimes,
The curse of curses is our curse to love,
To triumph in the blackness of our guilt,
(As Indians glory in the deepest jet)
And throw aside our senses with our peace.

But grant no guilt, no shame, no least alloy ;
Grant joy and glory quite unsullied shone ;
Yet, still, it ill deserves Lorenzo's heart.
No joy, no glory, glitters in thy sight,
But, through the thin partition of an hour,
I see its sables wove by Destiny,
And that in sorrow buried, this in shame,
While howling furies ring the doleful knell,
And Conscience, now so soft thou scarce canst hear
Her whisper, echoes her eternal peal.

Where the prime actors of the last year's scene,
Their port so proud, their buskin, and their plume ?
How many sleep, who kept the world awake
With lustre and with noise ! Has Death proclaim'd
A truce, and hung his sated lance on high ?
'Tis brandish'd still, nor shall the present year

Be more tenacious of her human leaf,
Or spread, of feeble life, a thinner fall.

But needless monuments to wake the thought;
Life's gayest scenes speak man's mortality,
Though in a style more florid, full as plain
~~As mausoleums, pyramids, and tombs.~~

What are our noblest ornaments, but Deaths
Turn'd flatterers of Life in paint or marble,
The well-stain'd canvass, or the featur'd stone?
Our fathers grace, or rather haunt the scene.
Joy peoples her pavilion from the dead.

'Profess'd diversions! cannot these escape?'—
Far from it: these present us with a shroud,
And talk of death, like garlands o'er a grave.
As some bold plunderers for buried wealth,
We ransack tombs for pastime; from the dust
Call up the sleeping hero; bid him tread
The scene for our amusement. How like gods
We sit, and, wrapt in immortality,
Shed generous tears on wretches born to die;
Their fate deplored, to forget our own!

What all the pomps and triumphs of our lives
But legacies in blossom? Our lean soil,
Luxuriant grown, and rank in vanities,
From friends interr'd beneath, a rich manure!
Like other worms, we banquet on the dead;
Like other worms, shall we crawl on, nor know
Our present frailties or approaching fate?

Lorenzo! such the glories of the world!
What is the world itself? thy world—a grave.
Where is the dust that has not been alive?
The spade, the plough, disturb our ancestors.
From human mould we reap our daily bread.
The globe around earth's hollow surface shakes,
And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons.
O'er devestation we blind revels keep:
Whole buried towns support the dancer's heel.
The moist of human frame the sun exhales;
Winds scatter through the mighty void the dry;
Earth repossesses part of what she gave,

Night IX. THE CONSOLATION.

199

And the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire:
Each element partakes our scatter'd spoils;
As Nature wide our ruins spread. Man's death
Inhabits all things but the thought of man.

Nor man alone; his breathing bust expires;
His tomb is mortal: empires die: where, now,
The Roman? Greek? they stalk, an empty name!
Yet few regard them in this useful light,
Though half our learning is their epitaph.
When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,
That loves to wander in thy sunless realms,
O Death! I stretch my view, what visions rise!
What triumphs! toils imperial! arts divine!
In wither'd laurels glide before my sight!
What lengths of far-fam'd ages, billow'd high
With human agitation, roll along
In unsubstantial images of air!
The melancholy ghosts of dead renown,
Whispering faint echoes of the world's applause,
With penitential aspect as they pass,
All point at earth, and hiss at human pride;
The wisdom of the wise, and prancings of the great.

But, O Lorenzo! far the rest above,
Of ghastly nature, and enormous size,
One form assaults my sight, and chills my blood,
And shakes my frame. Of one departed World
I see the mighty shadow: oozy wreath
And dismal sea-weed crown her; o'er her urn
Reclin'd, she weeps her desolated realms,
And bloated sons, and, weeping, prophesies
Another's dissolution, soon, in flames:
But, like Cassandra, prophesies in vain;
In vain to many; not, I trust, to thee,

For, know'st thou not, or art thou loth to know,
The great decree, the counsel of the skies?
Deluge and Conflagration, dreadful powers!
Prime ministers of vengeance! chain'd in caves
Distinct, apart, the giant furies roar;
Apart, or such their horrid rage for ruin,
In mutual conflict would they rise, and wage

Eternal war, till one was quite devour'd,
But not for this ordain'd their boundless rage.
When Heaven's inferior instruments of wrath,
War, famine, pestilence, are found too weak
To scourge a world for her enormous crimes,
These are let loose alternate: down they rush,
Swift and tempestuous, from th' eternal throne,
With irresistible commission arm'd,
The world, in vain corrected, to destroy,
And ease creation of the shocking scene.

Seest thou, Lorenzo! what depends on man?
The fate of Nature, as for man her birth.
Earth's actors change earth's transitory scenes,
And make creation groan with human guilt.
How must it groan, in a new deluge whelm'd,
But not of waters! at the destin'd hour,
By the loud trumpet summon'd to the charge,
See all the formidable sons of fire,
Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, lightnings, play
Their various engines; all at once disgorge
Their blazing magazines, and take, by storm,
This poor terrestrial citadel of man. — .

Amazing period! when each mountain-height
Outburns Vesuvius; rocks eternal pour
Their melted mass; as rivers once they pour'd;
Stars rush, and final Ruin fiercely drives
Her ploughshare o'er creation!—while aloft,
More than astonishment! if more can be!
Far other firmament than e'er was seen,
Than e'er was thought by man! far other stars!
Stars animate, that govern these of fire;
Far other sun!—a sun, O how unlike
The Babe at Bethle'm! how unlike the Man
That groan'd on Calvary!—yet he it is;
That Man of sorrows! O how chang'd! what pomp!
In grandeur terrible all Heav'n descends!
And gods, ambitious, triumph in his train.
A swift archangel, with his golden wing,
As blots and clouds that darken and disgrace
The scene divine, sweeps stars and suns aside.

And now, all dross remov'd, Heav'n's own pure day,
Full on the confines of our ether flames.
While (dreadful contrast!) far, how far beneath!
Hell, bursting, belches forth her blazing seas
And storms sulphureous, her voracious jaws
Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.

Lorenzo! welcome to this scene; the last
In Nature's course, the first in Wisdom's thought.
This strikes, if aught can strike thee; this awakes
The most supine; this snatches man from death.
Rouse, rouse, Lorenzo! then, and follow me,
Where truth, the most momentous man can hear,
Loud calls my soul, and ardour wings her flight.
I find my inspiration in my theme:
The grandeur of my subject is my Muse.

At midnight, when mankind is wrapp'd in peace,
And worldly fancy feeds on golden dreams,
To give more dread to man's most dreadful hour;
At midnight, 'tis presum'd, this pomp will burst
From tenfold darkness, sudden as the spark
From smitten steel; from nitrous grain the blaze.
Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more!
The day is broke, which never more shall close!
Above, around, beneath, amazement all!
Terror and glory join'd in their extremes!
Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire!
All Nature struggling in the pangs of death!
Dost thou not hear her? dost thou not deplore
Her strong convulsions, and her final groan?
Where are we now? Ah me! the ground is gone
On which we stood. Lorenzo! while thou may'st
Provide more firm support, or sink for ever.
Where? how? from whence? Vain hope! it is too late!
Where, where, for shelter, shall the guilty fly,
When consternation turns the good man pale?

Great day! for which all other days were made;
For which earth rose from chaos, man from earth,
And an eternity, the date of gods,
Descended on poor earth-created man!
Great day of dread, decision, and despair!

At thought of thee each sublunary
Lets go its eager grasp, and drops
And catches at each reed of hope i
At thought of thee!—and art thou a
Lorenzo! no; 'tis here; it is begun;
Already is begun the grand assize,
In thee, in all: deputed Conscience
The dread tribunal, and forestalls o
Forestalls, and, by forestalling, pro
Why on himself should man void j
Is idle Nature laughing at her sons
Who Conscience sent her sentence
And God above assert that God in

Thrice happy they! that enter no
Heav'n opens in their bosoms: but
Ah me! that magnanimity, how rar
What hero like the man who stands
Who dares to meet his naked heart
Who hears, intrepid, the full charge
Resolv'd to silence future murmurs
The coward flies, and, flying, is un
(Art thou a coward? no :) the cowai
Thinks, but thinks slightly; asks, bu
Asks ' What is truth?' with Pilate,
Dissolves the court, and mingles w
Asylum sad! from reason, hope, an

Shall all but man look out with a
For that great day which was ordai
O day of consummation! mark supr
(If men are wise) of human though
Or in the sight of angels or their E
Angels, whose radiant circles, heig
Order o'er order, rising, blaze o'er
As in a theatre, surround this scen
Intent on man, and anxious for his
Angels look out for thee; for thee
To vindicate his glory; and for the
Creation universal calls aloud
To disinvolve the moral world, and
To Nature's renovation brighter chi

Night IX. THE CONSOLATION. 203

Shall man alone, whose fate, whose final fate,
Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought?
I think of nothing else; I see! I feel it!
All Nature, like an earthquake, trembling round!
All deities, like summer's swarms, on wing!
All basking in the full meridian blaze!
I see the Judge enthron'd! the flaming guard!
The volume open'd! open'd every heart!
A sun-beam pointing out each secret thought!
No patron! intercessor none! now past
The sweet, the clement mediatorial hour!
For guilt no plea! to pain no pause! no bound!
Inexorable all! and all extreme!

Nur man alone; the foe of God and man,
From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,
And rears his brazen front, with thunder scarr'd,
Receives his sentence, and begins his hell.
All vengeance past, now seems abundant grace.
Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll
His baleful eyes! he curses whom he dreads,
And deems it the first moment of his fall.

"Tis present to my thought!—and yet where is it?
Angels can't tell me; angels cannot guess
The period, from created beings lock'd
In darkness; but the process and the place
Are less obscure; for these may man inquire.
Say, thou great close of human hopes and fears!
Great key of hearts! great finisher of fates!
Great end! and great begining! say, where art thou?
Art thou in time, or in eternity?
Nor in eternity nor time I find thee:
These, as two monarchs, on their borders meet,
(Monarchs of all elaps'd or unarriv'd!)
As in debate, how best their powers allied
May swell the grandeur, or discharge the wrath
Of him, whom both their monarchies obey.

'Time, this fast fabric for him built (and doom'd
With him to fall) now bursting o'er his head,
His lamp, the sun, extinguish'd, from beneath
The frown of hideous darkness calls his sons

And second death, to guard immortal life;
To rouse the careless, the presumptuous awe,
And turn the tide of souls another way;
By the same tenderness divine ordain'd
That planted Eden, and high-bloom'd for man
A fairer Eden, endless, in the skies.

Heav'n gives us friends to bless the present scene,
Resumes them to prepare us for the next.
All evils natural are moral goods,
All discipline indulgence, on the whole.
None are unhappy: all have cause to smile,
But such as to themselves that cause deny.
Our faults are at the bottom of our paths:
Error in acts, or judgment, is the source
Of endless sighs. We sin, or we mistake,
And Nature tax, when false opinion stings.
Let impious grief be banish'd, joy indulg'd,
But chiefly then when Grief puts in her claim.
Joy from the joyous frequently betrays,
Oft lives in vanity, and dies in woe.
Joy amidst ills corroborates, exalts;
'Tis joy and conquest; joy and virtue too.
A noble fortitude in ills delights
Heav'n, earth, ourselves; 'tis duty, glory, peace.
Affliction is the good man's shining scene,
Prosperity conceals his brightest ray.
As night to stars, woe lustre gives to man.
Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,
And virtue in calamities, admire.
The crown of manhood is a winter-joy;
An ever-green that stands the northern blast,
And blossoms in the rigour of our fate.

'Tis a prime part of happiness to know
How much unhappiness must prove our lot;
A part which few possess! I'll pay life's tax,
Without one rebel murmur, from this hour,
Nor think it misery to be a man;
Who thinks it is shall never be a god.
Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live.

What spoke proud Passion!—‘Wish my being lost?*
Presumptuous! blasphemous! absurd! and false!
The triumph of my soul is,—that I am;
And therefore that I may be—what? Lorenzo!
Look inward, and look deep; and deeper still;
Unfathomably deep our treasure runs,
In golden veins, through all eternity!
Ages, and ages, and succeeding still
New ages, where the phantom of an hour,
Which courts, each night, dull slumber for repair,
Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praise,
And fly through infinite, and all unlock,
And (if deserv'd) by Heaven's redundant love,
Made half-adorable, itself adore,
And find, in adoration, endless joy!
Where thou, not master of a moment here,
Frail as the flow'r and fleeting as the gale,
May'st boast a whole eternity, enrich'd
With all a kind Omnipotence can pour.
Since Adam fell, no mortal, uninspir'd,
Has ever yet conceiv'd, or ever shall,
How kind is God, how great (if good) is man.
No man too largely from Heav'n's love can hope,
If what is hop'd he labours to secure.

Ills!—there are none: All-gracious! none from thee;
From man full many! Num'rous is the race
Of blackest ills, and those immortal too,
Begot by Madness on fair Liberty,
Heaven's daughter, hell-debauch'd! her hand alone
Unlocks destruction to the sons of men,
Fast barr'd by thine: high-wall'd with adamant,
Guarded with terrors reaching to this world,
And cover'd with the thunders of thy law,
Whose threats are mercies, whose injunctions guides,
Assisting, not restraining, Reason's choice;
Whose sanctions, unavoidable results
From Nature's course, indulgently reveal'd,
If unreveal'd more dangerous, nor less sure.

* Referring to the First Night.

210 THE CONSOLATION. Night IX.

Of most our weakness needs believe or do,
In this our land of travail and of hope,
For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies.

What then remains? much! much! a mighty debt
To be discharg'd. These thoughts, O Night! are thine;
From thee they came, like lovers' secret sighs,
While others slept. So Cynthia, (poets feign)
In shadows veil'd, soft-sliding from her sphere,
Her shepherd cheer'd, of her enamour'd less
Than I of thee.—And art thou still unsung,
Beneath whose brow, and by whose aid, I sing?
Immortal Silence! where shall I begin?
Where end? or how steal music from the spheres
To soothe their goddess?

O majestic Night!
Nature's great ancestor! Day's elder-born?
And fated to survive the transient sun?
By mortals and immortals seen with awe!
A starry crown thy raven brow adorns,
An azure zone thy waist; clouds, in heaven's loom
Wrought through varieties of shape and shade,
In ample folds of drapery divine,
Thy flowing mantle form, and Heav'n throughout,
Voluminously pour thy pompous train:
Thy gloomy grandeurs (Nature's most august,
Inspiring aspect!) claim a grateful verse,
And, like a sable curtain starr'd with gold,
Drawn o'er my labours past, shall close the scene.

And what, O man! so worthy to be sung?
What more prepares us for the songs of Heaven?
Creation of archangels is the theme!
What to be sung so needful, what so well
Celestial joys prepare us to sustain?
The soul of man, His face design'd to see
Who gave these wonders to be seen by man,
Has here a previous scene of objects great
On which to dwell, to stretch to that expanse
Of thought, to rise to that exalted height
Of admiration, to contract that awe,
And give her whole capacities that strength

Which best may qualify for final joy.
The more our spirits are enlarg'd on earth,
The deeper draught shall they receive of Heaven.

Heaven's King! whose face unveil'd consummates
Redundant bliss! which fills that mighty void [bliss,
The whole creation leaves in human hearts!
Thou! who didst touch the lip of Jesse's son,
Rapt in sweet contemplation of these fires,
And set his harp in concert with the spheres,
While of thy works material the Supreme
I dare attempt, assist my daring song:
Loose me from earth's inclosure; from the sun's
Contracted circle set my heart at large;
Eliminate my spirit, give it range
Through provinces of thought yet unexplor'd;
Teach me, by this stupendous scaffolding,
Creation's golden steps, to climb to thee:
Teach me with art great Nature to control,
And spread a lustre o'er the shades of night.
Feel I thy kind assent? and shall the sun
Be seen at midnight, rising in my song?

Lorenzo! come, and warm thee; thou whose heart,
Whose little heart, is moor'd within a nook
Of this obscure terrestrial, anchor weigh;
Another ocean calls, a nobler port;
I am thy pilot, I thy prosperous gale:
Gainful thy voyage through yon azure main,
Main without tempest, pirate, rock, or shore,
And whence thou may'st import eternal wealth,
And leave to beggar'd minds the pearl and gold.
Thy travels dost thou boast o'er foreign realms?
Thou stranger to the world! thy tour begin;
Thy tour through Nature's universal orb:
Nature delineates her whole chart at large
On soaring souls, that sail among the spheres;
And man how purblind, if unknown the whole
Who circles spacious earth, then travels here,
Shall own he never was from home before;
Come, my Prometheus? *from thy pointed rock

* Night the Eighth.

Of false ambition, if unchain'd, we'll mount;
We'll, innocently, steal celestial fire,
And kindle our devotion at the stars;
A theft that shall not chain, but set thee free.
Above our atmosphere's intestine wars,
Rain's fountain-head, the magazine of hail;
Above the northern nests of feather'd snows,
The brew of thunders, and the flaming forge
That forms the crooked lightning; 'bove the caves
Where infant tempests wait their growing wings,
And tune their tender voices to that roar
Which soon, perhaps, shall shake a guilty world;
Above misconstrued omens of the sky,
Far-travell'd comets' calculated blaze,
Elance thy thought, and think of more than man:
Thy soul, till now contracted, wither'd, shrunk,
Blighted by blasts of earth's unwholesome air,
Will blossom here; spread all her faculties
To these bright ardours; every pow'r unfold,
And rise into sublimities of thought.
Stars teach, as well as shine. At Nature's birth
Thus their commission ran.—' Be kind to man.'
Where art thou, poor benighted traveller!
The stars will light thee, though the moon should fail,
Where art thou, more benighted! more astray!
In ways immoral? the stars call thee back,
And, if obey'd their counsel, set thee right.

This prospect vast, what is it?—Weigh'd aright
'Tis Nature's system of divinity,
And every student of the night inspires.
'Tis elder Scripture, writ by God's own hand;
Scripture authentic! uncorrupt by man.
Lorenzo! with my radius (the rich gift
Of thought nocturnal!) I'll point out to thee
Its various lessons; some that may surprise
An unadvent in mysteries of Night;
Little, perhaps, expected in her school,
Nor thought to grow on planet or on star.
Bulls, lions, scorpions, monsters here we feign,

Ourselves more monstrous, not to see what here
Exists, indeed,—a lecture to mankind.

What read we here?—th' existence of a God?
Yes; and of other beings man above;
Natives of ether! sons of higher climes!
And, what may move Lorenzo's wonder more,
Eternity is written in the skies.
And whose eternity?—Lorenzo! thine;
Mankind's eternity. Nor faith alone,
Virtue grows here; here springs the sovereign cure
Of almost every vice, but chiefly thine,
Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure desire.

Lorenzo! thou canst wake at midnight too,
Though not on morals bent. Ambition, Pleasure!
Those tyrants I for thee so lately fought,*
Afford their harass'd slaves but slender rest.
Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon,
And the sun's noon-tide blaze prime dawn of day,
Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,
Commencing one of our antipodes!
In thy nocturnal rove one moment halt,
'Twixt stage and stage of riot and cabal,
And lift thine eye, (if bold an eye to lift,
If bold to meet the face of injur'd Heav'n)
To yonder stars: for other ends they shine
Than to light revellers from shame to shame,
And thus be made accomplices in guilt.

Why from yon arch, that infinite of space,
With infinite of lucid orbs replete,
Which set the living firmament on fire
At the first glance, in such an overwhelm
Of wonderful on man's astonish'd sight
Rushes Omnipotence?—To curb our pride,
Our reason rouse, and lead it to that Power
Whose love lets down these silver chains of light;
To draw up man's ambition to himself,
And bind our chaste affections to his throne.
Thus the three virtues, least alive on earth,

* Night the Eighth.

And welcom'd on Heaven's coast with most applause,
An humble, pure, and heavenly-minded heart,
Are here inspir'd;—and canst thou gaze too long?

Nor stands thy wrath depriv'd of its reproof,
Or unupbraided by this radiant choir.

The planets of each system represent
Kind neighbours; mutual amity prevails;
Sweet interchange of rays, receiv'd, return'd,
Enlightening and enlighten'd! all, at once,
Attracting and attracted! patriot-like,
None sins against the welfare of the whole;
But their reciprocal, unselfish aid,
Affords an emblem of millennial love.

Nothing in nature, much less conscious being,
Was e'er created solely for itself.

Thus man his sovereign duty learns in this
Material picture of benevolence.

And know, of all our supercilious race,
Thou most inflammable! thou wasp of men!
Man's angry heart, inspected, would be found
As rightly set as are the starry spheres:
'Tis Nature's structure, broke by stubborn will,
Breeds all that unceas'tal discord there.
Wilt thou not feel the bias Nature gave?
Canst thou descend from converse with the skies,
And seize thy brother's throat?—For what?—a clod?
An inch of earth? The planets cry, 'Forbear.'
They chase our double darkness, Nature's gloom,
And (kinder still! our intellectual night.

And see, Day's amiable sister sends
Her invitation in the softest rays
Of mitigated lustre; courts thy sight,
Which suffers from her tyrant-brother's blaze.
Night grants thee the full freedom of the skies,
Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye;
With gain and joy she bribes thee to be wise.
Night opes the noblest scenes, and sheds an awe
Which gives those venerable scenes full weight.
And deep reception in th' entender'd heart,
While light peeps through the darkness like a spy,

And darkness shows its grandeur by the light.
Nor is the profit greater than the joy,
If human hearts at glorious objects glow,
And admiration can inspire delight.

What speak I more than I this moment feel?
With pleasing stupor first the soul is struck
(Stupor ordain'd to make her truly wise!)
Then into transport starting from her truce,
With love and admiration how she glows!
This gorgeous apparatus! this display!
This ostentation of creative power!
This theatre!—what eye can take it in?
By what divine enchantment was it rais'd,
For minds of the first magnitude to launch
In endless speculation, and adore?
One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine,
And light us deep into the Deity;
How boundless in magnificence and might!
O what a confluence of ethereal fires,
From urns unnumber'd, down the steep of heav'n
Stream's to a point, and centres in my sight!
Nor tarries there; I feel it at my heart:
My heart, at once, it humbles and exalts;
Lays it in dust, and calls it to the skies.
Who sees it unexalted, or unaw'd?
Who sees it, and can stop at what is seen?
Material offspring of Omnipotence!
Inanimate, all-animating birth!
Work worthy him who made it! worthy praise!
All praise! praise more than human! nor deny'd
Thy praise divine!—But though man drown'd in sleep,
Withholds his homage, not alone I wake;
Bright legions swarm unseen, and sing unheard
By mortal ear, the glorious Architect,
In this his universal temple hung
With lustres, with innumerable lights,
That shed religion on the soul; at once
The temple and the preacher! O how loud
It calls devotion! genuine growth of Night!
Devotion! daughter of Astronomy!

An undevout astronomer is mad.
True; all things speak a God; but in the small
Men trace out him; in great he seizes man;
Seizes, and elevates, and raps, and fills
With new inquiries, mid associates new.
Tell me, ye Stars! ye Planets! tell me, all
Ye starr'd and planeted Inhabitants! what is it?
What are these sons of wonder? Say, proud Arch,
(Within whose azure palaces they dwell)
Built with divine ambition! in disdain
Of limit built! built in the taste of Heav'n!
Vast concave! ample dome! wast thou design'd
A meet apartment for the Deity?—
Not so; that thought alone thy state impairs,
Thy lofty sinks, and shallows thy profound,
And strengthens thy diffusive; dwarfs the whole,
And makes an universe an orrery.

But when I drop mine eye, and look on man,
Thy right regain'd, thy grandeur is restor'd,
O Nature! wide flies off th' expanding round:
As when whole magazines, at once, are fir'd,
The smitten air is hollow'd by the blow,
The vast displosion dissipates the clouds,
Shock'd ether's billows dash the distant skies;
Thus (but far more) th' expanding round flies off,
And leaves a mighty void, a spacious womb,
Might teem with new creation; reinflam'd,
Thy luminaries triumph, and assume
Divinity themselves. Nor was it strange
Matter high-wrought to such surprising pomp,
Such godlike glory, stole the style of gods,
From ages dark, obtuse, and steep'd in sense:
For sure to sense they truly are divine,
And half-absolv'd idolatry from guilt,
Nay, turn'd it into virtue. Such it was
In those who put forth all they had of man
Unlost, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher,
But, weak of wing, on planets perch'd, and thought
What was their highest must be their ador'd.

But they how weak, who could no higher mount?

Night IX. THE CONSOLATION.

217

And are there, then, Lorenzo! those to whom
Unseen, and unexistent, are the same?
And if incomprehensible is join'd,
Who dare pronounce it madness to believe?
Why has the mighty Builder thrown aside
All measure in his work? stretch'd out his line
So far, and spread amazement o'er the whole?
Then (as he took delight in wide extremes)
Deep in the bosom of his universe
Dropp'd down that reasoning mite, that insect, man,
To crawl, and gaze, and wonder at the scene?—
That man might ne'er presume to plead amazement
For disbelief of wonders in himself.
Shall God be less miraculous than what
His hand has form'd? shall mysteries descend
From unmysterious? things more elevate
Be more familiar? uncreated lie—
More obvious than created to the grasp
Of human thought? The more of wonderful
Is heard in him, the more we should assent.
Could we conceive him, God he could not be;
Or he not God, or we could not be men.
A God alone can comprehend a God:
Man's distance how immense! On such a theme
Know this, Lorenzo! (seem it ne'er so strange)
Nothing can satisfy but what confounds;
Nothing but what astonishes is true.
The scene thou seest attests the truth I sing,
And every star sheds light upon thy creed.
These stars, this furniture, this cost of Heav'n,
If but reported, thou hadst ne'er believ'd;
But thine eye tells thee the romance is true.
The grand of Nature is th' Almighty's oath
In Reason's court, to silence Unbelief.
How my mind, op'ning at this scene, imbibes
The moral emanations of the skies,
While nought, perhaps, Lorenzo less admires!
Has the Great Sovereign sent ten thousand worlds
To tell us he resides above them all,
In glory's unsapproachable recess?

And dare earth's bold inhabitants deny
The sumptuous, the magnific embassy
A moment's audience? Turn we, nor will hear
From whom they come, or what they would impart
For man's emolument, sole cause that stoops
Their grandeur to man's eye? Lorenzo! rouse;
Let thought, awaken'd, take the lightning's wing,
And glance from east to west, from pole to pole.
Who sees but is confounded, or convinc'd?
Renounces reason, or a God adores?
Mankind was sent into the world to see:
Sight gives the science needful to their peace;
That obvious science asks small learning's aid.
Wouldst thou on metaphysic pinions soar?
Or wound thy patience amid logic thorns?
Or travel history's enormous round?
Nature no such hard task enjoins: she gave
A make to man directive of his thought;
A make set upright, pointing to the stars,
As who shall say, 'Read thy chief lesson there.'
Too late to read this manuscript of Heav'n,
When, like a parchment scroll, shrunken up by flames,
It folds Lorenzo's lesson from his sight.
Lesson how various! not the God alone,
I see his ministers; I see, diffus'd
In radiant orders, essences sublime,
Of various offices, of various plume,
In heavenly liveries distinctly clad,
Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,
Or all commix'd; they stand, with wings outspread,
Listening to catch the Master's least command,
And fly through nature ere the moment ends;
Numbers innumerable!—Well conceiv'd
By Pagan and by Christian! O'er each sphere
Presides an angel to direct its course,
And feed, or fan, its flames, or to discharge
Other high trusts unknown: for who can see
Such pomp of matter, and imagine mind,
For which alone inanimate was made,
More sparingly dispens'd? that nobler son,

Far liker the great Sire!—"Tis thus the skies
Inform us of superiors numberless,
As much, in excellence, above mankind,
As above earth, in magnitude, the spheres.
These, as a cloud of witnesses, hang o'er us,
In a throng'd theatre are all our deeds.
Perhaps a thousand demigods descend
On every beam we see to walk with men.
Awful reflection! strong restraint from ill!

Yet here our virtue finds still stronger aid
From these ethereal glories sense surveys.
Something, like magic, strikes from this blue vault:
With just attention is it view'd? we feel
A sudden succour, unimplor'd, unthought.
Nature herself does half the work of man.
Seas, rivers, mountains, forests, deserts, rocks,
The promontory's height, the depth profound
Of subterranean excavated grotts,
Black-brow'd, and vaulted high, and yawning wide,
From Nature's structure or the scoop of Time;
If ample of dimension, vast of size,
E'en these an aggrandizing impulse give;
Of solemn thought enthusiastic heights
E'en these infuse.—But what of vast in these?
Nothing—or we must own the skies forgot,
Much less in art.—Vain Art! thou pigmy power!
How dost thou swell, and strut, with human pride,
To shew thy littleness! What childish toys,
Thy watery columns squirted to the clouds!
Thy basin'd rivers and imprison'd seas!
Thy mountains moulded into forms of men!
Thy hundred-gated capitals! or those
Where three days' travel left us much to ride;
Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,
Arches triumphal, theatres immense,
Or nodding gardens pendent in mid air!
Or temples proud to meet their gods half way!
Yet these affect us in no common kind:
What then the force of such superior scenes?
Enter a temple, it will strike an awe:

What awe from this the Deity has built?
A good man seen, though silent, counsel gives:
The touch'd spectator wishes to be wise.
In a bright mirror his own hands have made,
Here we see something like the face of God.
Seems it not then enough to say, Lorenzo,
To man abandon'd, 'Hast thou seen the skies?'

And yet so thwarted Nature's kind design
By daring man, he makes her sacred awe
(That guard from ill) his shelter, his temptation
To more than common guilt, and quite inverts
Celestial Art's intent. The trembling stars
See crimes gigantic, stalking through the gloom
With front erect, that hide their head by day,
And making night still darker by their deeds.
Slumbering in covert, till the shades descend,
Rapine and Murder, link'd, now prowl for prey.
The miser earths his treasure, and the thief,
Watching the mole, half-beggars him ere morn.
Now plots and foul Conspiracies awake,
And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,
Havock and devastation they prepare,
And kingdoms tottering in the field of blood.
Now sons of riot in mid-revel rage.
What shall I do?—suppress it? or proclaim?—
Why sleeps the thunder? Now, Lorenzo! now
His best friend's couch the rank adulterer
Ascends secure, and laughs at gods and men.
Preposterous madmen, void of fear or shame,
Lay their crimes bare to these chaste eyes of Heav'n,
Yet shrink and shudder at a mortal's sight.
Were moon and stars for villains only made
To guide, yet screen them, with tenebrious light?
No; they were made to fashion the sublime
Of human hearts, and wiser make the wise.

Those ends were answer'd once, when mortals liv'd
Of stronger wing, of aquiline ascent,
In theory sublime. O how unlike
Those vermine of the night, this moment sung,
Who crawl on earth, and on her venom feed!

Those ancient sages, human stars! they met
Their brothers of the skies at midnight hour,
Their counsel ask'd, and what they ask'd obey'd.
The Stagirite, and Plato, he who drank
The poison'd bowl, and he of Tusculum,
With him of Corduba (immortal names!)
In these unbounded and Elysian walks,
An area fit for gods and godlike men,
They took their nightly round, thro' radiant paths,
By seraphs trod; instructed, chiefly, thus,
To tread in their bright footsteps here below,
To walk in worth still brighter than the skies.
There they contracted their contempt of earth;
Of hopes eternal kindled there the fire;
There, as in near approach, they glow'd, and grew
(Great visitants!) more intimate with God,
More worth to men, more joyous to themselves.
Through various virtues they, with ardour, ran
The zodiac of their learn'd illustrious lives.

In Christian hearts O for a Pagan zeal!
A needful, but opprobrious pray'r! as much
Our ardour less, as greater is our light.
How monstrous this in morals! Scarce more strange
Would this phenomenon in nature strike,
A sun that froze her, or a star that warm'd.

What taught these heroes of the moral world?
To these thou giv'st thy praise, give credit too.
These doctors ne'er were pension'd to deceive thee,
And Pagan tutors are thy taste.—They taught,
That narrow views betray to misery;
That wise it is to comprehend the whole;
That virtue rose from Nature, ponder'd well,
The single base of virtue built to Heav'n;
That God and Nature our attention claim;
That Nature is the glass reflecting God,
As by the sea reflected is the sun,
Too glorious to be gaz'd on in his sphere;
That mind immortal loves immortal aims;
That boundless mind affects a boundless space;
That vast surveys, and the sublime of things,

The soul assimilate, and make her great;
That, therefore, Heaven her glories, as a fund
Of inspiration, thus spreads out to man.
Such are their doctrines; such the Night inspir'd.
And what more true? what truth of greater weight?
The soul of man was made to walk the skies.
Delightful outlet of her prison here!
There, disincumber'd from her chains, the ties
Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large;
There freely can respire, dilate, extend,
In full proportion let loose all her powers,
And, undeluded, grasp at something great.
Nor as a stranger does she wander there,
But, wonderful herself, through wonder strays;
Contemplating their grandeur, finds her own;
Dives deep in their economy divine,
Sits high in judgment on their various laws,
And, like a master, judges not amiss.
Hence greatly pleas'd, and justly proud, the soul
Grows conscious of her birth celestial; breathes
More life, more vigour, in her native air,
And feels herself at home among the stars,
And, feeling, emulates her country's praise.

What call we, then, the firmament, Lorenzo?—
As earth the body, since the skies sustain
The soul with food that gives immortal life,
Call it the noble pasture of the mind,
Which there expatiates, strengthens, and exults,
And riots through the luxuries of thought.
Call it the garden of the Deity,
Blossom'd with stars, redundant in the growth
Of fruit ambrosial, moral fruit to man.
Call it the breastplate of the true High-priest,
Ardent with gems oracular, that give,
In points of highest moment, right response;
And ill neglected, if we prize our peace.

Thus havē we found a true astrology;
Thus have we found a new and noble sense,
In which alone stars govern human fates.
O that the stars (as some have feign'd) let fall

Bloodshed, and havock, on embattled realms,

And rescued monarchs from so black a guilt!

Bourbon! this wish how generous in a foe!

Wouldst thou be great, wouldst thou become a god,
And stick thy deathless name among the stars,

For mighty conquests on a needle's point?

Instead of forging chains for foreigners,

Bastile thy tutor; grandeur all thy aim?

As yet thou know'st not what it is. How great,
How glorious, then appears the mind of man,

When in it all the stars, and planets roll!

And what it seems it is. Great objects make
Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge;

Those still more godlike as these more divine.

And more divine than these thou caust not see.

Dazzled, o'erpower'd, with the delicious draught

Of miscellaneous splendours, how I reel

From thought to thought, inebriate, without end!

An Eden this! a Paradise unlost!

I meet the Deity in every view,

And tremble at my nakedness before him!

O that I could but reach the tree of life!

For here it grows unguarded from our taste;

No flaming sword denies our entrance here:

Would man but gather, he might live for ever.

Lorenzo! much of moral hast thou seen:

Of curious arts art thou more fond? then mark

The mathematic glories of the skies,

In number, weight, and measure, all ordain'd.

Lorenzo's boasted builders, Chance and Fate,

Are left to finish his aerial towers;

Wisdom and Choice their well-known characters

Here deep impress, and claim it for their own.

Though splendid all, no splendour void of use.

Use rivals beauty, art contends with power;

No wanton waste amid effuse expense,

The great Economist adjusting all

To prudent pomp, magnificently wise.

How rich the prospect! and for ever new;

And newest to the man that views it most;

For newer still in infinite succeeds.
Then these aerial racers, O how swift!
How the shaft loiters from the strongest string
Spirit alone can distance the career,
Orb above orb ascending without end!
Circle in circle, without end, inclos'd!
Wheel within wheel, Ezekiel, like to thine!
Like thine, it seems a vision or a dream;
Though seen, we labour to believe it true!
What involution! what extent! what swarms
Of worlds, that laugh at earth! immensely great
Immensely distant from each other's spheres!
What, then, the wondrous space thro' which they roll?
At once it quite engulfs all human thought;
'Tis Comprehension's absolute defeat.

Nor think thou seest a wild disorder here:
Through this illustrious chaos to the sight,
Arrangement neat and chaste order reign.
The path prescrib'd, inviolably kept,
Upbraids the lawless sallies of mankind.
Worlds ever thwarting never interfere:
What knots are tied! how soon are they dissolv'd!
And set the seeming married planets free!
They rove for ever, without error rove;
Confusion unconfus'd! nor less admire
This tumult untumultuous; all on wing!
In motion all! yet what profound repose;
What fervid action, yet no noise! as aw'd
To silence by the presence of their Lord;
Or hush'd, by his command, in love to man,
And bid let fall soft beams on human rest,
Restless themselves. On yon cerulean plain,
In exultation to their God and thine,
They dance, they sing eternal jubilee,
Eternal celebration of his praise.
But since their song arrives not at our ear,
Their dance perplex'd exhibits to the sight
Fair hieroglyphic of his peerless power.
Mark how the labyrinthian turns they take,
The circles intricate, and mystic maze,

IX. THE CONSOLATION.

225

e the grand cipher of Omnipotence;
ds how great! how legible to man!
ves so much wonder greater wonder still?
s are the pillars that support the skies?
more than Atlantean shoulder props
icumbent load? what magic, what strange art,
id air these pond'rous orbs sustains?
would not think them hung in golden chains?—
o they are; in the high will of Heav'n,
fixes all; makes adamant of air,
r of adamant; makes all of nought,
ught of all, if such the dread decree.
gine from their deep foundations torn
lost gigantic sons of earth, the broad
owering Alps, all toss'd into the sea;
light as down, or volatile as air,
bulks enormous dancing on the waves,
ne and measure exquisite; while all
inds in emulation of the spheres,
their sonorous instruments aloft,
oncert swell, and animate the ball.
t this appear amazing? what then worlds
ar thinner element sustain'd,
icting the same part with greater skill,
rapid movement, and for noblest ends?
e obvious ends to pass, are not these stars
eats majestic, proud imperial thrones,
hich angelic delegates of heav'n,
rtain periods, as the Sovereign nods,
arge high trusts of vengeance or of love,
othe in outward grandeur grand design,
cts most solemn still more solemnize?
tizens of air! what ardent thanks,
full effusion of the grateful heart,
e from man, indulg'd in such a sight!
ht so noble! and a sight so kind!
ips new truths at every new survey!
not Lorenzo something stir within,
sweeps away all period? As these spheres
re duration, they no less inspire.

The godlike hope of ages without end.
The boundless space, through which these rovers take
Their restless roam, suggests the sister-thought
Of boundless time. Thus by kind Nature's skill,
To man unlabour'd, that important guest,
Eternity, finds entrance at the sight;
And an eternity for man ordain'd,
Or these his destin'd midnight counsellors,
The stars, had never whisper'd it to man.
Nature informs, but ne'er insults, her sons:
Could she, then, kindle the most ardent wish
To disappoint it?—That is blasphemy.
Thus of thy creed a second article,
Momentous as th' existence of a God,
Is found (as I conceive) where rarely sought,
And thou may'st read thy soul immortal here.

Here, then, Lorenzo! on these glories dwell,
Nor want the gilt, illuminated roof,
That calls the wretched gay to dark delights.
Assemblies?—this is one divinely bright;
Here, unendanger'd in health, wealth, or fame,
Range through the fairest, and the Sultan's scorn.
He, wise as thou, no Crescent holds so fair
As that which on his turban awes a world,
And thinks the moon is proud to copy him.
Look on her, and gain more than worlds can give
A mind superior to the charms of power.
Thou muffled in delusions of this life!
Can yonder moon turn Ocean in his bed
From side to side in constant ebb and flow,
And purify from stench his watery realms,
And fails her moral influence? wants she power
To turn Lorenzo's stubborn tide of thought
From stagnating on earth's infected shore,
And purge from nuisance his corrupted heart?
Fails her attraction when it draws to Heav'n?
Nay, and to what thou valuest more, earth's joy?
Minds elevate, and panting for unseen,
And defecate from sense, alone obtain
Full relish of existence undeflower'd.

L. THE CONSOLATION.

227

of life, the zest of worldly bliss;
on earth amounts—to what? to this,
be suffer'd, blessings to be left:
ichest inventory boasts no more.
er scenes be then the call obey'd.
gaze!—of gazing there's no end.
think!—thought, too, is wilder'd here;
ay flight Imagination tires;
reprunes her wing to soar anew,
t unable to forbear or gain;
the pleasure, so profound the plan!
et this where men and angels meet,
ame manna, mingle earth and Heav'n.
ant some of these nocturnal suns!
t (says the sage) 'twere not absurd
. if beams, set out at Nature's birth,
arriv'd at this so foreign world,
nothing half so rapid as their flight.
f awe and wonder let me roll,
for ever. Who can satiate sight
a scene? in such an ocean wide
astonishment? where depth, height, breadth
in their extremes; and where to count
-sown glories in this field of fire,
a seraph's computation fails.
Ambition! boast thy boundless might
est o'er the tenth part of a grain,
t Lorenzo calls for miracles,
his tottering faith a solid base.
for less than is already thine?
no novice in theology;
a miracle?—'tis a reproach,
uplicit satire on mankind,
e it satisfies it censures too.
on-sense great Nature's course proclaims
When mankind falls asleep,
e is sent as an alarm
the world, and prove him o'er again,
t argument, but not more strong.
a imports more plenitude of power,

Or Nature's laws to fix, or to repeal?
To make a sun, or stop his mid career?
To countermand his orders, and send back
The flaming courier to the frightened East,
Warm'd and astonish'd at his evening ray?
Or bid the moon, as with her journey tir'd,
In Ajalon's soft flowery vale repose?
Great things are these? still greater to create,
From Adam's bow'r look down thro' the whole train
Of miracles;—resistless is their power?
They do not, cannot, more amaze the mind,
Than this, call'd unmiraculous survey,
If duly weigh'd, if rationally seen,
If seen with human eyes. The brute, indeed,
Sees nought but spangles here; the fool, no more.
Say'st thou, 'The course of Nature governs all?'
The course of Nature is the art of God,
The miracles thou call'st for this attest;
For say, could Nature Nature's course control?

But, miracles apart, who sees him not
Nature's Controller, Author, Guide, and End?
Who turns his eye on Nature's midnight face,
But must inquire—'What hand behind the scene,
What arm Almighty, put these wheeling globes
In motion, and wound up the vast machine?
Who rounded in his palm these spacious orbs?
Who bowl'd them flaming thro' the dark profound,
Numerous as glittering gems of morning dew,
Or sparks from populous cities in a blaze,
And set the bosom of old Night on fire,
Peopled her desert, and made horror smile?'
Or if the military style delights thee,
(For stars have fought their battles, leagued with man)
'Who marshals this bright host? enrolls their names,
Appoints their post, their marches, and returns,
Punctual, at stated periods? who disbands
These veteran troops, their final duty done,
If e'er disbanded?'—He whose potent word,
Like the loud trumpet, levy'd first their powers
In night's inglorious empire, where they slept

Night IX. THE CONSOLATION.

229

In beds of darkness; arm'd them with fierce flames;

Arrang'd, and disciplin'd, and cloth'd in gold,

And call'd them out of Chaos to the field,

Where now they war with Vice and Unbelief.

O let us join this army! joining these

Will give us hearts intrepid at that hour

When brighter flames shall cut a darker night;

When these strong demonstrations of a God

Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their spheres,

And one eternal curtain cover all!

Struck at that thought, as new-awak'd, I lift

A more enlighten'd eye, and read the stars

To man still more propitious, and their aid

(Though guiltless of idolatry) implore,

Nor longer rob them of their noblest name.

O ye dividers of my time! ye bright

Accomptants of my days, and months, and years,

In your fair kalendar distinctly mark'd!

Since that authentic, radiant register,

Though man inspects it not, stands good against him;

Since you and years roll on, though man stands stil,

Teach me my days to number, and apply

My trembling heart to wisdom, now beyond

All shadow of excuse for fooling on.

Age smooths our path to prudence; sweeps aside

The snares keen appetite and passion spread

To catch stray souls; and woe to that gray head

Whose folly would undo what age hath done!

Aid, then, aid, all ye Stars!—Much rather thou,

Great Artist! thou whose finger set aright

This exquisite machine, with all its wheels,

Though intervolv'd, exact, and pointing out

Life's rapid and irrevocable flight

With such an index fair as none can miss

Who lifts an eye, nor sleeps till it is clos'd;

Open mine eye, dread Deity! to read

The tacit doctrine of thy works; to see

Things as they are, unalter'd through the glass

Of worldly wishes. Time, Eternity!

(Tis these mismeasur'd ruin all mankind)

Set them before me; let me lay them
In equal scale, and learn their value;
Let time appear a moment, as it is,
And let eternity's full orb, at once,
Turn on my soul, and strike it home;
When shall I see far more than these?
Gaze on creation's model in thy face,
Unveil'd, nor wonder at the transitory;
When this vile, foreign dust, which we
That travel earth's deep vale, shall we see?
When shall my soul her incarnation find,
And, re-adopted to thy bless'd embrace,
Obtain her apotheosis in thee?—

Dost think, Lorenzo, this is weakness? No; 'tis directly striking at the heart. To wake thy dead devotion * was hard; And how I bless Night's consecration! Which to a temple turn an univer-
Fill us with great ideas, full of grandeur; And antidote the pestilential ear, In every storm that either frown or smile; What an asylum has the soul in such a state! And what a fane is this in which to shelter it! And what a God must dwell in such a temple! O what a genius must inform the heart of Lorenzo! And is Lorenzo's salamander-heated heart so cold, and untouched, amid these scenes? O ye nocturnal sparks! ye glowing embers! On Heaven's broad hearth! who burn and blaze, or die, as great Jehovah does; Or blows you, or forbears, assist me! Pour your whole influence; exorcise me! So long possess'd, and bring him back to me.

And is Lorenzo a demurrer still? Pride in thy parts provokes thee to speak. Truths which, contested, put thy shame to flight; Nor shame they more Lorenzo's heart, A faithless heart, how despicably

* Ver. 610.

o strait aught great or generous to receive!
I'd with an atom! fill'd and foul'd with self!
d self-mistaken! self, that lasts an hour!
tincts and passions of the nobler kind.
suffocated there, or they alone,
son apart, would wake high hope, and open,
ravish'd thought, that intellectual sphere
ere Order, Wisdom, Goodness, Providence,
ir endless miracles of love display,
d promise all the truly great desire.
e mind that would be happy must be great;
eat in its wishes, great in its surveys.
ended views a narrow mind extend,
sh out its corrugate, expansive make,
ich, ere long, more than planets shall embrace.
nan of compass makes a man of worth:
fine contemplate, and become divine.
s man was made for glory and for bliss,
littleness is in approach to woe.
in thy bosom, set thy wishes wide,
d let in manhood; let in happiness;
mit the boundless theatre of thought
m nothing, up to God, which makes a man.
te God from Nature, nothing great is left;
n's mind is in a pit, and nothing sees;
n's heart is in a jakes, and loves the mire.
erge from thy profound; erect thine eye;
thy distress! how close art thou besieg'd!
sieg'd by Nature, the proud sceptic's foe!
los'd by these innumerable worlds,
rkling conviction on the darkest mind,
in a golden net of Providence,
w art thou caught, sure captive of belief!
m this thy bless'd captivity what art,
at blasphemy to reason, sets thee free!
s scene is Heaven's indulgent violence;
ast thou bear up against this tide of glory?
at is earth bosom'd in these ambient orbs,
t faith in God impos'd, and press'd on man?
r'st thou still litigate thy desperate cause.

L

Spite of these numerous, awful witness
And doubt the deposition of the skies
O how laborious is thy way to ruin!

Laborious? 'tis impracticable quite
To sink beyond a doubt in this deba
With all its weight of wisdom and o
And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.
Some wish they did, but no man dis
God is a spirit; spirit cannot strike
These gross material organs; God by
As much is seen, as man a God can
In these astonishing exploits of pow
What order, beauty, motion, distance
Concertion of design, how exquisite!
How complicate in their divine poli
Apt means! great ends! consent to g
Each attribute of these material gods
So long (and that with specious plea
A separate conquest gains o'er rebel
And leads in triumph the whole mil

Lorenzo! this may seem harangue
Such all is apt to seem that thwarts
And dost thou, then, demand a simp
Of this great master-moral of the sky
Unskill'd or disinclin'd, to read it thi
Since 'tis the basis, and all drops wi
Take it in one compact, unbroken ch
Such proof insists on an attentive ea
'Twill not make one amid a mob of
And for thy notice struggle with the
Retire;—the world shut out;—thy
Imagination's airy wing repress;—
Lock up thy senses;—let no passion
Wake all to Reason;—let her reign;
Then in thy soul's deep silence, and
Of Nature's silence, midnight, thus
As I have done, and shall inquire n
In Nature's channel thus the questi
• What am I? and from whence?—I
But that I am; and since I am, con



IX. THE CONSOLATION.

233

thing eternal: had there e'er been nought,
ght still had been: eternal there must be.—
what eternal? Why not human race?
Adam's ancestors without an end?—
s hard to be conceiv'd, since every link
at long-chain'd succession is so frail.
every part depend, and not the whole?
grant it true, new difficulties rise;
till quite out at sea, nor see the shore.
ce earth, and these bright orbs?—Eternal too?—
t matter was eternal, still these orbs
ld want some other father;—much design
en in all their motions, all their makes.
n implies intelligence and art;
can't be from themselves—or man: that art
scarce can comprehend, could man bestow?
nothing greater yet allow'd than man.—
motion, foreign to the smallest grain,
through vast masses of enormous weight?
bid brute matter's restive lump assume
various forms, and gave it wings to fly?
natter innate motion? then each atom,
ting its indisputable right
nce, would form an universe of dust:
matter none? then whence these glorious forms
boundless flights, from shapeless and repos'd?
matter more than motion? has it thought,
ment, and genius? is it deeply learn'd
athematics? has it fram'd such laws,
h but to guess a Newton made immortal?—
how each sage atom laughs at me,
think a clod inferior to a man!
to form, and counsel to conduct,
that with greater far than human skill,
les not in each block,—a Godhead reigns.—
, then, invisible, eternal Mind;
granted, all is solv'd:—but granting that,
I not o'er me a still darker cloud?
t I not that which I can ne'er conceive?
ing without origin or end!—

Hail, human Liberty! there is no God—
Yet why? on either scheme that knot subsists;
Subsist it must in God or human race;
If in the last, how many knots beside,
Indissoluble all?—why choose it there
Where, chosen, still subsist ten thousand more?
Reject it where, that chosen, all the rest,
Dispers'd, leave Reason's whole horizon clear!—
This is not Reason's dictate; Reason says,
Close with the side where one grain turns the scale.
What vast preponderance is here! can Reason
With louder voice exclaim—' Believe a God?'
And reason heard, is the sole mark of man,
What things impossible must man think true
On any other system? and how strange
To disbelieve through mere credulity!"

If in this chain Lorenzo finds no flaw,
Let it for ever bind him to belief.
And where the link in which a flaw he finds?
And if a God there is, that God how great!
How great that Pow'r whose providential care
Through these bright orbs' dark centres darts a ray?
Of Nature universal threads the whole!
And hangs creation, like a precious gem,
Though little, on the footstool of his throne!

That little gem how large! A weight let fall
From a fix'd star, in ages can it reach
This distant earth? Say, then, Loreuzo! where,
Where ends this mighty building? where begin
The suburbs of creation? where the wall
Whose battlements look o'er into the vale
Of non-existence, Nothing's strange abode?
Say at what point of space Jehovah dropp'd
His slacken'd line, and laid his balance by;
Weigh'd worlds, and measur'd infinite no more?
Where rears his terminating pillar high
Its extramundane head? and says to gods,
In characters illustrious as the sun,
'I stand, the plan's proud period; I pronounce
The work accomplish'd; the creation clos'd;

Night IX. THE CONSOLATION,

235

Shout, all ye Gods! nor shout, ye Gods, alone;
Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,
That rests, or rolls; ye Heights and Depths, resound!
Resound! resound! ye Depths and Heights, resound!"

Hard are those questions!—answer harder still.
Is this the sole exploit, the single birth,

The solitary son of Pow'r Divine?

Or has th' Almighty Father, with a breath,

Impregnated the womb of distant Space?

Has he not bid, in various provinces,

Brother-creations the dark bowels burst

Of Night primeval, barren now no more?

And he the central sun, transpiercing all

Those giant-generations which disport,

And dance as motes, in his meridian ray,

That ray withdrawn, benighted, or absorb'd

In that abyss of horror whence they sprung;

While Chaos triumphs, repossest of all

Rival Creation ravish'd from his throne?

Chaos! of Nature both the womb and grave!

Think'st thou my scheme, Lorenzo, spreads too
Is this extravagant?—No; this is just; [wide?

Just in conjecture, though 'twere false in fact.

If 'tis an error, 'tis an error sprung

From noble root, high thought of the Most High.

But wherefore error? who can prove it such?

He that can set Omnipotence a bound.

Can man conceive beyond what God can do?

Nothing but quite impossible is hard.

He summons into being, with like ease,

A whole creation, and a single grain.

Speaks he the word? a thousand worlds are born!

A thousand worlds! there's space for millions more;

And in what space can his great fiat fail?

Condemn me not, cold critic! but indulge

The warm imagination: why condemn?

Why not indulge such thoughts as swell our hearts

With fuller admiration of that Power

Who gives our hearts with such high thoughts to swell?

Why not indulge in his augmented praise?

Darts not his glory a still brighter ray,
The less is left to Chaos and the realms
Of hideous Night, where Fancy strays agast,
And, though most talkative, makes no report?

Still seems my thought enormous? think again!—
Experience self shall aid thy lame belief,
Glasses, (that revelation to the sight!)
Have they not led us in the deep disclose
Of fine-spun Nature, exquisitely small,
And, though demonstrated, still ill-conceiv'd?
If, then, on the reverse the mind would mount
In magnitude; what mind can mount too far,
To keep the balance, and creation poise?
Defect alone can err on such a theme:
What is too great, if we the cause survey?
Stupendous Architect! thou, thou art all!
My soul flies up and down in thoughts of thee,
And finds herself but at the centre still!
I AM thy name! existence all thine own!
Creation's nothing, flatter'd much if styl'd
‘The thin, the fleeting atmosphere of God.’

O for the voice—of what? of whom?—what voice
Can answer to my wants, in such ascent
As dares to deem one universe too small?
Tell me, Lorenzo! (for now Fancy glows,
Fir'd in the vortex of almighty power)
Is not this home creation, in the map
Of universal Nature, as a speck,
Like fair Britannia, in our little ball;
Exceeding fair and glorious, for its size,
But, elsewhere, far outmeasur'd, far outshone?
In fancy (for the fact beyond us lies)
Canst thou not figure it, an isle, almost
Too small for notice in the vast of being;
Sever'd by mighty seas of unbuilt space
From other realms; from ample continents
Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;
Less northern, less remote from Deity,
Glowing beneath the line of the Supreme,
Where souls in excellence make haste, put forth

Luxuriant growths, nor the late autumn wait
Of human worth, but ripen soon to gods?

Yet why drown Fancy in such depths as these?
Return, presumptuous Rover! and confess
The bounds of man, nor blame them, as too small.
Enjoy we not full scope in what is seen?
Full ample the dominions of the sun!
Full glorious to behold! how far, how wide,
The matchless monarch from his flaming throne,
Lavish of lustre, throws his beams about him,
Farther and faster than a thought can fly,
And feeds his planets with eternal fires!
This Heliopolis, by greater far
Than the proud tyrant of the Nile was built,
And he alone who built it can destroy.
Beyond this city why strays human thought?
One wonderful enough for man to know!
One infinite enough for man to range!
One firmament enough for man to read!
O what voluminous instruction here!
What page of wisdom is denied him? none,
If learning his chief lesson makes him wise.
Nor is instruction here our only gain:
There dwells a noble pathos in the skies,
Which warms our passions, proselytes our hearts.
How eloquently shines the glowing pole!
With what authority it gives its charge,
Remonstrating great truths in style sublime,
Though silent, loud! heard earth around; above
The planets heard; and not unheard in hell;
Hell has her wonder, though too proud to praise.
Is earth, then, more infernal? has she those
Who neither praise (Lorenzo!) nor admire?

Lorenzo's admiration, pre-engag'd,
Ne'er ask'd the moon one question; never held
Least correspondence with a single star;
Ne'er rear'd an altar to the queen of Heaven
Walking in brightness, or her train ador'd.
Their sublunary rivals have long since
Engross'd his whole devotion; stars malign,

Which made the fond astronomer run mad,
Darken his intellect, corrupt his heart;
Cause him to sacrifice his fame and peace
To momentary madness, call'd delight:
Idolater more gross than ever kiss'd
The lifted hand to Luna, or pour'd out
The blood to Jove!—O thou, to whom belongs
All sacrifice! O thou great Jove unfeign'd!
Divine Instructor! thy first volume this
For man's perusal; all in capitals!
In moon and stars (Heav'n's golden alphabet!)
Emblaz'd to seize the sight, who runs may read;
Who reads can understand. 'Tis unconfin'd
To Christian land or Jewry; fairly writ,
In language universal, to mankind;
A language lofty to be learn'd, yet plain
To those that feed the flock, or guide the plough,
Or from his husk strike out the bounding grain;
A language worthy the great Mind that speaks!
Preface and comment to the sacred page!
Which oft refers its reader to the skies,
As presupposing his first lesson there,
And scripture 'self a fragment, that unread.
Stupendous book of wisdom to the wise!
Stupendous book! and open'd, Night! by thee.
By thee much open'd, I confess, O Night!
Yet more I wish; but how shall I prevail?
Say, gentle Night! whose modest, maiden beams,
Give us a new creation, and present
The world's great picture soften'd to the sight;
Nay, kinder far, far more indulgent still,
Say thou, whose mild dominion's silver key
Unlocks our hemisphere, and sets to view
Worlds beyond number, worlds conceal'd by day
Behind the proud and envious star of noon!
Canst thou not draw a deeper scene,—and shew
The Mighty Potentate to whom belong
These rich regalia, pompously display'd
To kindle that high hope? Like him of Uz,
I gaze around, I search on every side—

Night IX. THE CONSOLATION.

239

O for a glimpse of Him my soul adores!
As the chas'd hart, amid the desert waste,
Pants for the living stream, for Him who made her
So pants the thirsty soul amid the blank
Of sublunary joys. Say, goddess! where?
Where blazes his bright court? where burns his throne?
Thou know'st, for thou art near him; by thee, round
His grand pavilion, sacred Fame reports
The sable curtain drawn. If not, can none
Of thy fair daughter-train, so swift of wing,
Who travel far, discover where he dwells?
A star his dwelling pointed out below.
Ye Pleiades! Arcturus! Mazaroth!
And thou, Orion! of still keener eye!
Say ye, who guide the wilder'd in the waves,
And bring them out of tempest into port!
On which hand must I bend my course to find him?
These courtiers keep the secret of their King;
I wake whole nights, in vain, to steal it from them.

I wake, and, waking, climb Night's radiant scale
From sphere to sphere, the steps by Nature set
For man's ascent, at once to tempt and aid;
To tempt his eye, and aid his towering thought,
Till it arrives at the great goal of all.

In ardent Contemplation's rapid car,
From earth, as from my barrier, I set out.
How swift I mount! diminish'd earth recedes;
I pass the moon; and, from her farther side,
Pierce Heav'n's blue curtain; strike into remote;
Where, with his lifted tube, the subtle sage
His artificial airy journey takes,
And to celestial lengthens human sight.
I pause at every planet on my road,
And ask for him who gives their orbs to roll,
Their foreheads fair to shine. From Saturn's ring,
In which of earth's an army might be lost,
With the bold comet take my nobler flight,
Amid those sovereign glories of the skies,
Of independent, native lustre proud;
The souls of systems! and the lords of life.

Through their wide empires!—What behold I now?
A wilderness of wonder burning round,
Where larger suns inhabit higher spheres;
Perhaps the villas of descending gods;
Nor halt I here; my toil is but begun;
'Tis but the threshold of the Deity;
Or, far beneath it, I am grovelling still.
Nor is it strange; I built on a mistake:
The grandeur of his works, whence Folly sought
For aid, to Reason sets his glory higher;
Who built thus high for worms (mere worm to him)
O where, Lorenzo, must the builder dwell?

Pause, then, and, for a moment, here respire—
If human thought can keep its station here.
Where am I?—where is earth?—nay, where art thou,
O Sun?—Is the sun turn'd recluse?—and are
His boasted expeditions short to mine?—
To mine how short! On Nature's Alps I stand,
And see a thousand firmaments beneath!
A thousand systems! as a thousand grains!
So much a stranger, and so late arriv'd,
How can man's curious spirit not inquire
What are the natives of this world sublime,
Of this so foreign, unterrestrial sphere,
Where mortal, untranslated, never stray'd?

'O ye, as distant from my little home
As swiftest sunbeams in an age can fly;
Far from my native element I roam,
In quest of new and wonderful to man.
What province this, of his immense domain,
Whom all obeys? or mortals here, or gods?
Ye borderers on the coasts of bliss! what are you?
A colony from Heav'n? or only rais'd,
By frequent visit from Heaven's neighbouring realms,
To secondary gods, and half divine?
Whate'er your nature, this is past dispute,
Far other life you live, far other tongue
You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,
Than man. How various are the works of God!
But say, what thought? Is Reason here enthron'd,

Night IX. THE CONSOLATION.

241

And absolute? or Sense in arms against her?
Have you two lights? or need you no reveal'd?
Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?
And had your Eden an abstemious Eve?
Our Eve's fair daughters prove their pedigree,
And ask their Adams—"Who would not be wise?"
Or, if your mother fell, are you redeem'd?
And if redeem'd—is your Redeemer scorn'd?
Is this your final residence? if not,
Change you your scene translated, or by death?
And if by death, what death?—Know you disease?
Or horrid war?—With war, this fatal hour,
Europa groans, (so call we a small field
Where kings run mad.) In our world, Death deputes
Intemperance to do the work of Age,
And, hanging up the quiver Nature gave him,
As slow of execution, for despatch
Sends forth imperial butchers; bids them slay
Their sheep, (the silly sheep they fleec'd before)
And toss him twice ten thousand at a meal.
Sit all your executioners on thrones?
With you can rage for plunder make a god?
And bloodshed wash out every other stain?—
But you, perhaps, can't bleed: from matter gross
Your spirits clean are delicately clad
In fine-spun ether, privileg'd to soar,
Unloaded, uninfected. How unlike
The lot of man! how few of human race
By their own mud unmurder'd! how we wage
Self-war eternal!—Is your painful day
Of hardy conflict o'er? or are you still
Raw candidates at school? and have you those
Who disaffect reversions, as with us?—
But what are we? you never heard of man,
Or earth, the bedlam of the universe!
Where Reason (undiseas'd with you) runs mad,
And nurses Folly's children as her own,
Fond of the foulest. In the sacred mount
Of Holiness, where Reason is pronounced
Infallible, and thunders like a god,

E'en there, by saints the demons are outdone;
What these think wrong our saints refine to right,
And kindly teach dull Hell her own black arts;
Satan, instructed, o'er their morals smiles.—
But this how strange to you who know not man?
Has the least rumour of our race arriv'd?
Call'd here Elijah in his flaming car?
Past by you the good Enoch, on his road
To those fair fields whence Lucifer was hurl'd;
Who brush'd, perhaps, your sphere in his descent,
Stain'd your pure crystal ether, or let fall
A short eclipse from his portentous shade?
O that the fiend had lodg'd on some broad orb
Athwart his way, nor reach'd his present home,
Then blacken'd earth, with footsteps foul'd in hell;
Nor wash'd in ocean, as from Rome he past
To Britain's isle, too, too conspicuous there.'

But this is all digression: where is He
That o'er Heaven's battlements the felon hurl'd
To groans, and chains, and darkness? where is He
Who sees creation's summit in a vale?
He whom, while man is man, he can't but seek,
And if he finds, commences more than man?
O for a telescope his throne to reach!
Tell me, ye learn'd on earth! or bless'd above?
Ye searching, ye Newtonian angels! tell
Where your Great Master's orb? his planets where?
Those conscious satellites, those morning-stars,
First-born of Deity? from central love,
By veneration most profound, thrown off;
By sweet attraction no less strongly drawn:
Aw'd, and yet raptur'd; raptur'd, yet serene;
Past thought illustrious, but with borrow'd beams;
In still approaching circles still remote,
Revolving round the sun's eternal Sire?
Or sent, in lines direct, on embassies
To nations—in what latitude?—beyond
Terrestrial thought's horizon!—and on what
High errands sent?—Here human effort ends,
And leaves me still a stranger to his throne.

Full well it might! I quite mistook my road;
Born in an age more curious than devout,
More fond to fix the place of Heav'n or hell,
Than studious this to shun, or that secure.
'Tis not the curious but the pious path
That leads me to my point. Lorenzo! know,
Without or star or angel for their guide,
Who worship God shall find him. Humble Love,
And not proud Reason, keeps the door of Heav'n;
Love finds admission where proud Science fails.
Man's science is the culture of his heart,
And not to lose his plummet in the depths
Of Nature, or the more profound of God:
Either to know is an attempt that sets
The wisest on a level with the fool.
To fathom Nature (ill-attempted here!)
Past doubt is deep philosophy above;
Higher degrees in bliss archangels take,
As deeper learn'd, the deepest learning still.
For what a thunder of Omnipotence
(So might I dare to speak) is seen in all!
In man! in earth! in more amazing skies!
Teaching this lesson Pride is loth to learn—
"Not deeply to discern, not much to know,
Mankind was born to wonder and adore."

And is there cause for higher wonder still
Than that which struck us from our past surveys?—
Yes; and for deeper adoration too.
From my late airy travel unconfin'd,
Have I learn'd nothing?—Yes, Lorenzo! this;
Each of these stars is a religious house;
I saw their altars smoke, their incense rise,
And heard hosannas ring through every sphere,
A seminary fraught with future gods.
Nature all o'er is consecrated ground,
Teeming with growths immortal and divine.
The great Proprietor's all-bounteous hand
Leaves nothing waste, but sows these fiery fields
With seeds of Reason, which to virtues rise
Beneath his genial ray: and, if escap'd

The pestilential blasts of stubborn will,
When grown mature are gather'd for the skies,
And is devotion thought too much on earth,
When beings, so superior, homage boast,
And triumph in prostrations to the throne?

But wherefore more of planets or of stars?
Ethereal journeys, and, discover'd there,
Ten thousand worlds, ten thousand ways devout,
All Nature sending incense to the throne.
Except the bold Lorenzos of our sphere?
Opening the solemn sources of my soul,
Since I have pour'd, like feign'd Eridanus,
My flowing numbers o'er the flaming skies,
Nor see of fancy or of fact what more
Invites the Muse—here turn we and review
Our past nocturnal landscape wide;—then say,
Say, then, Lorenzo! with what burst of heart
The whole, at once, revolving in his thought,
Must man exclaim, adoring and aghast?
‘O what a root! O what a branch, is here!
O what a Father! what a family!
Worlds! systems! and creations!—and creations,
In one agglomerated cluster, hung,
Great Vine*! on thee, on thee the cluster hangs,
The filial cluster! infinitely spread
In glowing globes, with various being fraught,
And drinks (nectareous draught!) immortal life.
Or, shall I say (for who can say enough?)
A constellation of ten thousand gems,
(And, O! of what dimension! of what weight!)
Set in one signet, flames on the right hand
Of Majesty divine! The blazing seal,
That deeply stamps, on all created mind,
Indelible, his sovereign attributes,
Omnipotence and Love! that passing bound,
And this surpassing that. Nor stop we here
For want of pow'r in God, but thought in man.
E'en this acknowledg'd leaves us still in debt;

* John xv. 1.

IX. THE CONSOLATION.

245

water aught, that greater all is thine,
Sire!—Accept this miniature of thee,
pardon an attempt from mortal thought,
which archangels might have fail'd unblam'd?
such ideas of th' Almighty's pow'r,
such ideas of th' Almighty's plan,
not absurd) distend the thought
of mortals! nor of them alone!
ulness of the Deity breaks forth
conceivables to men and gods.
t, then, O think, nor ever drop the thought,
low must man descend when gods adore!
I not, then, accomplish'd my proud boast?
I not tell thee ' We would mount, Lorenzo!
kindle our devotion at the stars ?'
d have I fail'd? and did I flatter thee?
art all adamant? and dost confute,
rg'd, with one irrefragable smile?
nzo! mirth how miserable here!]
r by the stars, by Him who made them, swear,
heart, henceforth, shall be as pure as they;
thou, like them shalt shine; like them, shaltrise
low to lofty, from obscure to bright,
ue gradation, Nature's sacred law.
stars from whence?—ask Chaos—he can tell.
e bright temptations to idolatry
darkness and confusion took their birth;
of Deformity! from fluid dregs
trean first they rose to masses rude,
then to spheres opaque; then dimly shone,
brighten'd; then blaz'd out in perfect day.
re delights in progress, in advance
worse to better; but when minds ascend,
cess, in part, depends upon themselves,
n aids exertion. Greater makes the great.
voluntary little lessens more.
a man! and thou shalt be a god!
half self-made!—ambition how divine!
thou, ambitious of disgrace alone!
undevout? unkindled?—though high taught,

School'd by the skies, and pupil of the stars,
Rank coward to the fashionable world!
Art thou ashamed to bend thy knee to Heav'n?
Curs'd fume of pride, exhal'd from deepest hell!
Pride in religion is man's highest praise,
Bent on destruction! and in love with death!
Not all these luminaries, quench'd at once,
Were half so sad as one benighted mind,
Which gropes for happiness, and meets despair.
How like a widow in her weeds, the Night,
Amid her glimmering tapers, silent sits!
How sorrowful, how desolate, she weeps
Perpetual dews, and saddens Nature's scene!
A scene more sad sin makes the darken'd soul,
All comfort kills, nor leaves one spark alive.

Though blind of heart, still open is thine eye.
Why such magnificence in all thou seest?
Of matter's grandeur, know one end is this,
To tell the rational, who gazes on it,—
'Though that immensely great, still greater he
Whose breast capacious, can embrace and lodge,
Unburden'd, Nature's universal scheme;
Can grasp creation with a single thought;
Creation grasp, and not exclude its Sire.'—
To tell him farther—' It behoves him much
To guard th' important yet depending fate
Of being, brighter than a thousand suns;
One single ray of thought outshines them all.'—
And if man hears obedient, soon he'll soar
Superior heights, and on his purple wing,
His purple wing bedropp'd with eyes of gold,
Rising, where thought is now denied to rise,
Look down triumphant on these dazzling spheres.

Why then persist?—no mortal ever liv'd
But, dying, he pronounc'd (when words are true)
The whole that charms thee absolutely vain;
Vain, and far worse!—Think thou with dying men;
O condescend to think as angels think!
O tolerate a chance for happiness!
Our nature such, ill choice insures ill fate;

light IX. THE CONSOLATION. 247

nd hell had been, though there had been no God.
est thou not know, my new Astronomer!
irth, turning from the sun, brings night to man?
an, turning from his God, brings endless night;
here thou canst read no morals, find no friend,
nend no manners, and expect no peace.
ow deep the darkness! and the groan how loud!
nd far, how far, from lambent are the flames!—
ch is Lorenzo's purchase! such his praise!
ie proud, the politic Lorenzo's praise;
ough in his ear, and levell'd at his heart,
e half read o'er the volume of the skies.
For think not thou hast heard all this from me;
y song but echoes what great Nature speaks.
hat has she spoken?—Thus the goddess spoke,
us speaks for ever;—' Place, at Nature's head,
Sovereign which o'er all things rolls his eye,
tends his wing, promulgates his commands,
it, above all, diffuses endless good;
i whom, for sure redress, the wrong'd may fly,
e vile for mercy, and the pain'd for peace;
r whom the various tenants of these spheres,
versified in fortunes, place, and powers,
is'd in enjoyment, as in worth they rise,
rive at length (if worthy such approach)
that bless'd fountain-head from which they stream,
here conflict past redoubles present joy,
id present joy looks forward on increase,
id that on more; no period! every step
double boon! a promise and a bliss.
ow easy sits this scheme on human hearts!
suits their make, it soothes their vast desires;
ssion is pleas'd, and Reason asks no more;
s rational! 'tis great!—but what is thine?
darkens! shocks! excruciates! and confounds!
aves us quite naked, both of help and hope,
aking from bad to worse; few years the sport
Fortune, then the morsel of despair.
ay, then, Lorenzo! (for thou know'st it well)
hat's vice?—mere want of compass in our thought.

Religion what?—the proof of comm—
How art thou hooted where the lea—
Is it my fault if these truths call me—
And thou shalt never be miscall'd I—
Can neither Shame nor Terror stan—
And art thou still an insect in the—
How like thy guardian angel have—
Snatch'd thee from earth, escorted t—
Th' ethereal armies, walk'd thee, li—
Through splendours of first magnitu—
On either hand; clouds thrown ben—
Close-cruis'd on the bright paradise—
And almost introduc'd thee to the—
And art thou still carousing, for de—
Rank poison! first fermenting to me—
And then subsiding into final gall?—
To beings of sublime, immortal ma—
How shocking is all joy whose end—
Such joy more shocking still, the n—
And dost thou choose what ends ex—
And infamous as short? and dost th—
(Thou, to whose palate glory is so—
To wade into perdition through co—
Not of poor bigots only, but thy o—
For I have peep'd into thy cover'd—
And seen it blush beneath a boastf—
For by strong Guilt's most violent—
Conscience is but disabled, not des—

O thou most awful being! and me—
Thy will how frail! how glorious is—
Though dread Eternity has sown he—
Of bliss and woe in thy despotic bi—
Though Heav'n and hell depend up—
A butterfly comes cross, and both a—
Is this the picture of a rational?—
This horrid image, shall it be most—
Lorenzo! no; it cannot,—shall not—
If there is force in reason, or in so—
Chanted beneath the glimpses of th—
A magic, at this planetary hour,

lumber locks the general lip, and dreams,
In senseless mazes, hunt souls uninspir'd.
—the sacred mysteries begin—
Un night-born adjuration hear:
And I'll raise thy spirit from the dust,
The stars gaze on this enchantment new;
Ment not infernal, but divine!
Silence, Death's peculiar attribute;
Kness, Guilt's inevitable doom;
Kness and by Silence, sisters dread!
Draw the curtain round Night's ebon throne,
Is ideas solemn as the scene!
Ht, and all of awful Night presents
ight or sense (of awful much, to both,
Idess brings!) By these her trembling fires,
esta's, ever-burning, and, like her's,
to thoughts immaculate and pure!
e bright orators that prove and praise,
ess thee to revere the Deity,
, too, aid thee, when rever'd, awhile,
h his throne, as stages of the soul
n which, at different periods, she shall pass,
g gradual, for her final height,
rging off some dross at every sphere!
dark pall thrown o'er the silent world!
world's kings and kingdoms most renown'd,
hort Ambition's zenith set for ever,
sage to vain boasters, now in bloom!
long list of swift mortality,
dam downward to this evening knell,
midnight waves in Fancy's startled eye,
ocks her with an hundred centuries, [thought!
death's black banner throng'd in human
isands, now, resigning their last breath,
ding thee—wert thou so wise to hear!
bs o'er tombs arising, human earth
, to make room for—human earth,
narch's terror! and the sexton's trade!
pous obsequies that shun the day,
ch funereal, and the nodding plume,

The working movement, the
And master's last discourse,
By mortal Chain, and eternal
Desire—our last Philander be
But now not ill shadow'd my
Love to the living, duty to the
She know I'm but execratory;
The moral legacy; I make it
By his command; Philander he
And there's no both.—If dead
Philander's tender voice; his wu
On thy reading; it trembles at
For his sake—love thyself; exa
All human beauty; a bad stamp
More still a deth'ry; that shear
As parent of his being, wouldst
Thy unnatural power of his son
And make him over the being
In this the gloomy gloom of
All creation of Earth, were the
Woman's nature and Philander
Gambit's father born; it were well
And from Philander's love, were
A mother or a motherless
The gentle; or were she a
She bore me; and I was
The gentle; or were she a
She bore me; and I was

100

ght IX. THE CONSOLATION. 251

the most hopeless man can make to man.
ill I then rise in argument and warmth?
d urge Philander's posthumous advice,
m topics yet unbroach'd?—
t, oh! I faint! my spirits fail!—nor strange!
long on wing, and in no middle clime!
which my great Creator's glory call'd;
d calls—but, now, in vain. Sleep's dewy wand
strok'd my drooping lips, and promises
long arrear of rest: the downy god
ont to return with our returning peace)
I pay, ere long, and bless me with repose.
ste, haste, sweet stranger! from the peasant's cot,
shipboy's hammock, or the soldier's straw,
ence Sorrow never chas'd thee; with thee bring
hideous visions, as of late, but draughts
icious of well-tasted cordial rest,
s rich restorative; his balmy bath,
t supplies, lubricates, and keeps in play
various movements of this nice machine,
ich asks such frequent periods of repair.
en tir'd with vain rotations of the day,
p winds us up for the succeeding dawn,
ih we spin on, till sickness clogs our wheels,
leath quite breaks the spring, and motion ends:
en will it end with me?

—' Then only know'st,
u, whose broad eye the — and the past
s to the present, first — ee
moral thought: thou — you alone,
knowing — all who — all known!
though remaine — ness it left!

Who gav'st us speech for far, far humbler themes!
Say by what name shall I presume to call
Him I see burning in these countless suns,
As Moses in the bush? Illustrious Mind!
The whole creation less, far less, to thee,
Than that to the creation's ample round,
How shall I name thee?—How my labouring soul
Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth!
Great System of perfections! mighty Cause
Of causes mighty! Cause uncans'd! sole root
Of Nature, that luxuriant growth of God!
First Father of effects! that progeny
Of endless series, where the golden chain's
Last link admits a period who can tell?
Father of all that is or heard or hears!
Father of all that is or seen or sees!
Father of all that is or shall arise!
Father of this immeasurable mass
Of matter multiform, or dense or rare,
Opaque or lucid, rapid or at rest,
Minute or passing bound! in each extreme
Of like amaze and mystery to man.
Father of these bright millions of the night!
Of which the least full Godhead had proclaim'd,
And thrown the gazer on his knee—Or, say,
Is appellation higher still thy choice?
Father of matter's temporary lords!
Father of spirits! nobler offspring! sparks
Of high paternal glory, rich endow'd
With various measures, and with various modes
Of instinct, reason, intuition; beams
More pale or bright from day divine, to break
The dark of matter organiz'd (the ware
Of all created spirit) beams that rise
Each over other in superior light,
Till the last ripens into lustre strong,
Of next approach to Godhead. Father fond
(Far fonder than e'er bore that name on earth)
Of intellectual beings! beings bless'd
With pow'rs to please thee, not of passive ply

To laws they know not; beings lodg'd in seats
Of well-adapted joys, in different domes
Of this imperial palace for thy sons;
Of this proud, populous, well-policy'd,
Though boundless habitation, plann'd by thee;
Whose several clans their several climates suit,
And transposition, doubtless, would destroy.
Or, oh! indulge, immortal King! indulge
A title less august, indeed, but more
Endearing; ah! how sweet in human ears!
Sweet in our ears, and triumph in our hearts!
Father of immortality to man!
A theme that lately * set my soul on fire—
And Thou the next! yet equal! thou by whom
That blessing was convey'd, far more! was bought,
Ineffable the price! by whom all worlds
Were made, and one redeem'd! illustrious Light
From light illustrious! thou, whose regal power,
Finite in time, but infinite in space,
On more than adamantine basis fix'd,
O'er more, far more, than diadems and thrones
Inviolably reigns, the dread of gods!
And, oh! the friend of man! beneath whose foot,
And by the mandate of whose awful nod,
All regions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,
Of high, of low, of mind, and matter, roll
Through the short channels of expiring time,
Or shoreless ocean of eternity,
Calm or tempestuous (as thy Spirit breathes)
In absolute subjection!—And, O Thou!
The glorious Third! distinct, not separate!
Beaming from both! with both incorporate,
And (strange to tell!) incorporate with dust!
By condescension, as thy glory, great,
Inshrin'd in man! of human hearts, if pure,
Divine Inhabitant! the tie divine
Of Heav'n with distant earth! by whom, I trust,
(If not inspir'd) uncensur'd this address

* Nights Sixth and Seventh.

To thee, to them—to whom !—mysterious power!
Reveal'd—yet unreveal'd! darkness in light!
Number in unity! our joy! our dread!
The triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin!
That animates all right, the triple sun!
Sun of the soul! her never-setting sun!
Triune, unutterable, unconceiv'd,
Absconding, yet demonstrable, Great God!
Greater than greatest! better than the best!
Kinder than kindest! with soft Pity's eye,
Or (stronger still to speak it) with thine own,
From thy bright home, from that high firmament
Where thou, from all eternity, hast dwelt;
Beyond archangels' unassisted ken,
From far above what mortals highest call,
From Elevation's pinnacle, look down,
Through—what? confounding interval! through all,
And more, than labouring Fancy can conceive;
Through radiant ranks of essences unknown;
Through hierarchies from hierarchies detach'd
Round various banners of Omnipotence,
With endless change of rapturous duties fir'd;
Through wonderous beings' interposing swarms,
All clustering at the call, to dwell in thee;
Through this wide waste of worlds! this vista vast,
All sanded o'er with suns, suns turn'd to night
Before thy feeblest beam—look down—down—down,
On a poor breathing particle in dust,
Or, lower, an immortal in his crimes:
His crimes forgive! forgive his virtues too!
Those smaller faults, half-converts to the right:
Nor let me close these eyes, which never more
May see the sun (though Night's descending scale
Now weighs up Morn) unpitied and unbless'd!
In thy displeasure dwells eternal pain;
Pain, our aversion; pain, which strikes me now;
And, since all pain is terrible to man,
Though transient, terrible, at thy good hour,
Gently, ah! gently, lay me in my bed,
My clay-cold bed! by nature, now, so near;

By nature near, still nearer by disease!
Till then be this an emblem of my grave;
Let it outreach the preacher; every night
Let it outcry the boy at Philip's ear,
That tongue of death! that herald of the tomb!
And when (the shelter of thy wing implored)
My senses, sooth'd, shall sink in soft repose,
O sink this truth still deeper in my soul,
Suggested by my pillow, sign'd by Fate,
First in Fate's volume, at the page of Man—
‘ Man's sickly soul, though turn'd and toss'd for ever
From side to side, can rest on nought but thee;
Here in full trust, hereafter in full joy.’
On thee, the promis'd, sure, eternal down
Of spirits, toil'd in travel through this vale:
Nor of that pillow shall my soul despond;
For—Love almighty! Love almighty! (sing,
Exult, Creation!) Love almighty reigns!
That death of death! that cordial of despair!
And loud Eternity's triumphant song!

Of whom no more:—for, O thou Patron-God!
Thou God and mortal! thence more God to man!
Man's theme eternal! man's eternal theme!
Thou can'st not 'scape uninjur'd from our praise:
Uninjur'd from our praise can he escape
Who, disembosom'd from the Father, bows
The Heav'n of heavens to kiss the distant earth!
Breathes out in agonies a sinless soul!
Against the cross Death's iron sceptre breaks!
From famish'd Ruin plucks her human prey!
Throws wide the gates celestial to his foes!
Their gratitude, for such a boundless debt,
Deputes their suffering brothers to receive!
And if deep human guilt in payment fails,
As deeper guilt prohibits our despair!
Enjoins it, as our duty, to rejoice!
And (to close all) omnipotently kind,
Takes his delights among the sons of men.*

* Prov. chap. viii.

What words are these—and did they come from
And were they spoke to man? to guilty man? [Heav'n
What are all mysteries to love like this?
The songs of angels, all the melodies
Of choral gods, are wafted in the sound;
Heal and exhilarate the broken heart,
Though plung'd, before, in horrors dark as night!
Rich prelibation of consummate joy!
Nor wait we dissolution to be bless'd.

This final effort of the moral Muse,
How justly titled!* nor for me alone:
For all that read. What spirit of support,
What heights of Consolation, crown my song!

Then farewell Night! of darkness, now, no more;
Joy breaks, shines, triumphs; 'tis eternal day!
Shall that which rises out of nought complain
Of a few evils, paid with endless joys?
My soul! henceforth, in sweetest union join
The two supports of human happiness,
Which some, erroneous, think can never meet,
True taste of life, and constant thought of death!
The thought of death, sole victor of its dread!
Hope be thy joy, and probity thy skill;
Thy patron HE whose diadem has dropp'd
Yon gems of Heav'n, eternity thy prize;
And leave the racers of the world their own,
Their feather and their froth, for endless toils:
They part with all for that which is not bread;
They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power,
And laugh to scorn the fools that aim at more.
How must a spirit, late escap'd from earth,
Suppose Philander's, Lucia's, or Narcissa's,
The truth of things new-blazing in its eye,
Look back, astonish'd on the ways of men,
Whose lives' whole drift is to forget their graves!
And when our present privilege is past,
To scourge us with due sense of its abuse,
The same astonishment will seize us all.

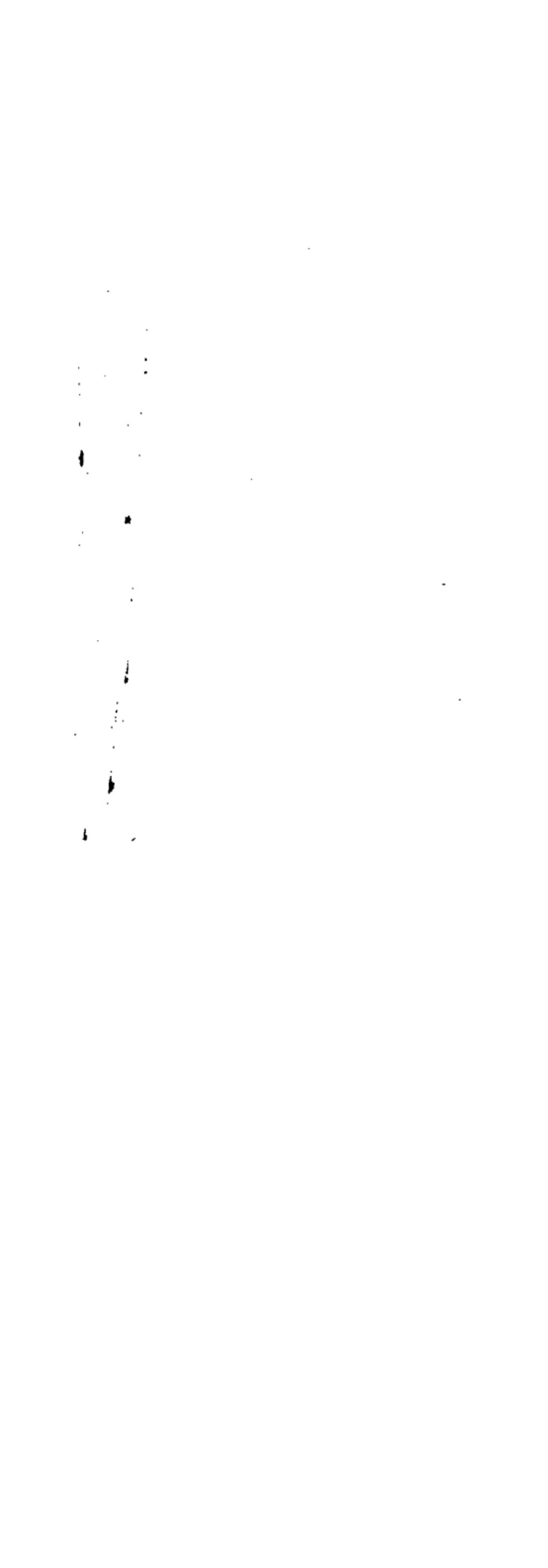
* The Consolation.

ht IX. THE CONSOLATION.

257

it then must pain us would preserve us now.
Lorenzo! 'tis not yet too late. Lorenzo!
ere wisdom, ere 'tis torment to be wise;
t is, seize Wisdom ere she seizes thee.
what, my small philosopher! is hell?
nothing but full knowledge of the truth,
n Truth, resisted long, is sworn our foe,
calls Eternity to do her right.
us darkness aiding intellectual light,
sacred Silence whispering truths divine,
truths divine converting pain to peace,
song the midnight raven has outwing'd,
I shot, ambitious of unbounded scenes,
ond the flaming limits of the world
gloomy flight. But what avails the flight
ancy, when our hearts remain below?
ue abounds in flatterers and foes;
pride to praise her, penance to perform.
more than words, to more than worth of tongue,
enzo! rise, at this auspicious hour,
hour when Heaven's most intimate with man;
n, like a falling star, the ray divine
des swift into the bosom of the just;
I just are all determin'd to reclaim,
ich sets that title high within thy reach.
ake, then; thy Philander calls: awake!
u, who shalt wake when the Creation sleeps;
n, like a taper, all these suns expire;
n Time, like him of Gaza in his wrath,
cking the pillars that support the world,
Nature's ample ruins lies entomb'd,
I midnight, universal, midnight! reigns.

END OF THE NIGHT THOUGHTS.



THE
LAST DAY.

A POEM. IN THREE BOOKS.

BOOK I.

WHILE others sing the fortune of the great,
Empire and arms, and all the pomp of state,
With Britain's hero * set their souls on fire,
And grow immortal as his deeds inspire,
I draw a deeper scene; a scene that yields
A louder trumpet, and more dreadful fields;
The world alarm'd, both earth and heav'n o'erthrown,
And gasping Nature's last tremendous groan;
Death's ancient sceptre broke, the teeming tomb,
The righteous Judge, and man's eternal doom!

'Twixt joy and pain I view the bold design,
And ask my anxious heart if it be mine?
Whatever great or dreadful has been done
Within the sight of conscious stars or sun,
Is far beneath my daring: I look down
On all the splendours of the British crown.
This globe is for my verse a narrow bound;
Attend me, all ye glorious worlds around!
O! all ye angels, howsoe'er disjoin'd,
Of every various order, place, and kind,
Hear, and assist a feeble mortal's lays;
'Tis your eternal King I strive to praise.

But chiefly thou, great Ruler! Lord of all!
Before whose throne archangels prostrate fall;
If at thy nod, from discord, and from night,
Sprang beauty, and yon sparkling worlds of light,
Exalt e'en me; all inward tumults quell;
The clouds and darkness of my mind dispel;

* The Duke of Marlborough.

To my great subject thou my breast inspire,
And raise my labouring soul with equal fire.

Man! bear thy brow aloft, view every grace
In God's great offspring, beauteous Nature's face;
See Spring's gay bloom, see golden Autumn's store,
See how Earth smiles, and hear old Ocean roar.
Leviathans but heave their cumbrous mail,
It makes a tide, and wind-bound navies sail.
Here forests rise, the mountain's awful pride;
Here rivers measure climes, and worlds divide;
There vallies, fraught with gold's resplendent seeds,
Hold kings' and kingdoms' fortunes in their beds:
There to the skies aspiring hills ascend,
And into distant lands their shades extend.
View cities, armies, fleets; of fleets the pride,
See Europe's law in Albion's channel tide.
View the whole earth's vast landscape unconfin'd,
Or view in Britain all her glories join'd.

Then let the firmament thy wonder raise;
'Twill raise thy wonder, but transcend thy praise.
How far from east to west? the labouring eye
Can scarce the distant azure bounds descry:
Wide theatre! where tempests play at large,
And God's right hand can all its wrath discharge,
Mark how those radiant lamps inflame the pole,
Call forth the seasons, and the year control:
They shine through time with an unalter'd ray,
See this grand period rise, and that decay:
So vast, this world's a grain; yet myriads grace,
With golden pomp, the throng'd ethereal space;
So bright, with such a wealth of glory stor'd,
'Twere sin in Heathens not to have ador'd.

How great, how firm, how sacred, all appears!
How worthy an immortal round of years!
Yet all must drop, as autumn's sickest grain,
And earth and firmament be sought in vain:
The tract forgot where constellations shone,
Or where the Stuarts fill'd an awful throne:
Time shall be slain, all nature be destroy'd,
Nor leave an atom in the mighty void.

Sooner or later, in some future date,
(A dreadful secret in the book of fate!)
This hour, for aught all human wisdom knows,
Or when ten thousand harvests more have rose;
When scenes are chang'd on this revolving earth,
Old empires fall, and give new empires birth;
While other Bourbons rule in other lands,
And (if man's sin forbids not) other Annes;
While the still busy world is treading o'er
The paths they trod five thousand years before,
Thoughtless as those who now life's mazes run,
Of earth dissolv'd, or an extinguish'd sun;
(Ye sublunary Worlds! awake, awake!
Ye Rulers of the nations! hear, and shake!)
Thick clouds of darkness shall arise on day,
In sudden night all earth's dominions lay,
Impetuous winds the scatter'd forests rend,
Eternal mountaius, like their cedars, bend;
The vallies yawn, the troubled ocean roar,
And break the bondage of his wonted shore,
A sanguine stain the silver moon o'erspread,
Darkness the circle of the sun invade;
From inmost heav'n incessant thunders roll,
And the strong echo bound from pole to pole.

When, lo! a mighty trump, one half conceal'd
In clouds, one half to mortal eye reveal'd,
Shall pour a dreadful note; the piercing call
Shall rattle in the centre of the ball;
Th' extended circuit of creation shake,
The living die with fear, the dead awake.

Oh powerful blast! to which no equal sound
Did e'er the frightened ear of Nature wound,
Though rival clarions have been strain'd on high,
And kindled wars immortal through the sky,
Though God's whole enginery discharg'd, and all
The rebel angels bellow'd in their fall.

Have angels sinn'd? and shall not man beware?
How shall a son of earth decline the snare?
Not folded arms, and slackness of the mind,
Can promise for the safety of mankind,

None are supinely good; through ca
And various arts, the steep ascent v
This is the scene of combat, not of
Man's is laborious happiness at best
On this side death his dangers neve
His joys are joys of conquest, not o

If then, obsequious to the will of
And bending to the terms of human
When guilty joys invite us to their
When Beauty smiles, or Grandeur spre
The conscious soul would this great
Call down th' immortal hosts in dre
The trumpet sound, the Christian be
And raise from silent graves the tre
Such deep impression would the pic
No power on earth her firm resolve
Engag'd with angels she would grea
And look regardless down on sea an
Not proffer'd worlds her ardour cou
And Death might shake his threatenin
Her certain conquest would endear
And danger serve but to exalt deli

Instructed thus to shun the fatal
Whence flow the terrors of that day
More boldly we our labours may p
And all the dreadful image set to

The sparkling eye, the sleek and
The burnish'd scale, curl'd train, a
All that is lovely in the noxious si
Provokes our fear, and bids us flee
The sting once drawn, his guiltless
In pleasing lustre, and detain our
We view with joy what once did h
And strong aversion softens into lo

Say then, my muse! whom disma
Frequent at tombs, and in the real
Say, melancholy maid! if bold to d
The last extremes of terror and de
Oh say what change on earth, wha
This blackest moment since the wo

Ah mournful turn! the blissful earth, who late
At leisure on her axle roll'd in state,
While thousand golden planets knew no rest,
Still onward in their circling journey press'd;
A grateful change of seasons some to bring,
And sweet vicissitude of fall and spring;
Some through vast oceans to conduct the keel,
And some those wat'ry worlds to sink or swell:
Around her some their splendours to display,
And gild her globe with tributary day:
This world so great, of joy the bright abode,
Heaven's darling child, and favourite of her God,
Now looks an exile from her Father's care,
Deliver'd o'er to darkness and despair.
No sun in radiant glory shines on high,
No light, but from the terrors of the sky:
Fall'n are her mountains, her fam'd rivers lost,
And all into a second chaos toss'd:
One universal ruin spreads abroad;
Nothing is safe beneath the throne of God.

Such, Earth! thy fate; what then canst thou afford
To comfort and support, thy guilty lord!
Man, haughty lord of all beneath the moon,
How must he bend his soul's ambition down?
Prostrate, the reptile own, and disavow
His boasted stature and assuming brow?
Claim kindred with the clay and curse his form,
That speaks distinction from his sister worm?
What dreadful pangs the trembling heart invade?
Lord! why dost thou forsake whom thou hast made?
Who can sustain thy anger? who can stand
Beneath the terrors of thy lifted hand?
It flies the reach of thought: oh, save me, Pow'r
Of pow'rs supreme, in that tremendous hour!
Thou who beneath the frown of Fate hast stood,
And in thy dreadful agony swate blood;
Thou who for me through every throbbing vein,
Hast felt the keenest edge of mortal pain:
Whom death led captive through the realms below,
And taught those horrid mysteries of woe;

Defend me, O my God! oh, save me
Of pow'rs supreme, in that tremend

From east to west they fly, from p
Imploring shelter from the wrath d
Beg flames to wrap, or whelming se
Or rocks to yawn, compassionately
Seas cast the monster forth to meet
And rocks but prison up for wrath

So fares a traitor to an earthly cre
While Death sits threatening in his
His heart's dismay'd; and now his
To change his native for a distant l
Swift orders fly, the king's severe d
Stands in the channel, and locks up
The port he seeks, obedient to her l
Hurls back the rebel to his lifted sw

But why this idle toil to paint tha
This time elaborately thrown away?
Words all in vain pant after the dis
The height of eloquence would mak
Heav'ns! how the good man tremble

And is there a Last Day? and mu
A sure, a fix'd inexorable doom?
Ambition! swell, and, thy proud sai
Take all the winds that Vanity can
Wealth! on a golden mountain blazi
And reach an India forth in either l
Spread all thy purple clusters, temp
And thou, more dreaded foe, bright
Shine all, in all your charms togethe
That all, in all your charms, I may
While I mount upward on a strong
Borne, like Elijah, in a car of fire.

In hopes of glory to be quite invo
To smile at death! to long to be dis
From our decays a pleasure to receiv
And kindle into transpōrt at a grave
What equals this? And shall the vic
Boast the proud laurels on his loade
Religion! oh thou cherub, heavenly!
Oh joys unmix'd, and fathomless del

Thou, thou art all; nor find I in the whole
Creation aught but God and my own soul.

For ever, then, my soul! thy God adore,
Nor let the brute-creation praise him more.
Shall things inanimate my conduct blame,
And flush my conscious cheek with spreading shame?
They all for him pursue, or quit, their end;
The mounting flames their burning pow'r suspend;
In solid heaps th' unfrozen billows stand,
To rest and silence aw'd by his command:
Nay, the dire monsters that infest the flood,
By nature dreadful, and athirst for blood,
His will can calm, their savage tempers bind,
And turn to mild protectors of mankind.
Did not the prophet this great truth maintain
In the deep chambers of the gloomy main,
When darkness round him all her horrors spread,
And the loud ocean bellow'd o'er his head;

When now the thunder roars, the lightning flies,
And all the warring winds tumultuous rise;
When now the foaming surges, toss'd on high,
Disclose the sands beneath, and touch the sky;
When death draws near, the mariners aghast
Look back with terror on their actions past,
Their courage sickens into deep dismay,
Their hearts through fear and anguish melt away;
Nor tears, nor pray'rs, the tempest can appease;
Now they devote their treasure to the seas;

Unload their shatter'd bark, though richly fraught,
And think the hopes of life are cheaply bought
With gems and gold; but, oh, the storm so high!
Nor gems nor gold the hopes of life can buy.

The trembling prophet then, themselves to save,
They headlong plunge into the briny wave;
Down he descends, and, booming o'er his head,
The billows close; he's number'd with the dead.
(Hear, O ye just! attend ye virtuous few!
And the bright paths of piety pursue)
Lo! the great Ruler of the world, from high,
Looks smiling down with a propitious eye.

Covers his servant with his gracious hand,
And bids tempestuous Nature silent stand;
Commands the peaceful waters to give place,
Or kindly fold him in a soft embrace;
He bridles in the monsters of the deep;
The bridled monsters awful distance keep;
Forget their hunger while they view their prey,
And guiltless gaze, and round the stranger play.
But still arise new wonders; Nature's Lord
Sends forth into the deep his powerful word,
And calls the great leviathan; the great
Leviathan attends in all his state,
Exults for joy, and with a mighty bound,
Makes the sea shake, and heaven and earth resound,
Blackens the waters with the rising sand,
And drives vast billows to the distant land.

As yawns an earthquake, when imprison'd air
Struggles for vent, and lays the centre bare,
The whale expands his jaw's enormous size,
The prophet views the cavern with surprise,
Measures his monstrous teeth, afar describ'd,
And rolls his wondering eyes from side to side;
Then takes possession of the spacious seat,
And sails secure within the dark retreat.

Now is he pleas'd the northern blast to hear,
And hangs on liquid mountains void of fear,
Or falls, immers'd, into the depths below,
Where the dead silent waters never flow;
To the foundations of the hills convey'd,
Dwells in the shelving mountain's dreadful shade;
Where plummet never reach'd he draws his breath,
And glides serenely through the paths of death.

Two wondrous days and nights through coral groves,
Through labyrinths of rocks and sands, he roves;
When the third morning, with its level rays,
The mountains gilds, and on the billows plays,
It sees the king of waters rise, and pour
His sacred guest uninjur'd on the shore;
A type of that great blessing which the Muse
In her next labour ardently pursues.

THE
LAST DAY.
BOOK II.

NOW man awakes, and from his silent bed,
Where he has slept for ages, lifts his head,
Shakes off the slumber of ten thousand years,
And on the borders of new worlds appears.
Whate'er the bold, the rash adventure cost,
In wide eternity I dare be lost.
The Muse is wont in narrow bounds to sing,
To teach the swain, or celebrate the king.
I grasp the whole; no more to parts confin'd,
I lift my voice, and sing to human kind;
I sing to men and angels; angels join,
While such the theme, their sacred songs with mine.

Again the trumpet's intermittent sound
Rolls the wide circuit of creation round,
An universal concourse to prepare
Of all that ever breath'd the vital air;
In some wide field, which active whirlwinds sweep,
Drive cities, forests, mountains, to the deep,
To smoothe and lengthen out th' unbounded space,
And spread an area for all human race.

Now monuments prove faithful to their trust,
And render back their long-committed dust;
Now charnels rattle; scatter'd limbs, and all
The various bones, obsequious to the call,
Self-mov'd adyance; the neck, perhaps, to meet
The distant head; the distant legs the feet.
Dreadful to view, see through the dusky sky
Fragments of bodies in confusion fly,
To distant regions journeying, there to claim
Deserted members, and complete the frame.

When the world bow'd to Rome's almighty sword,
Rome bow'd to Pompey, and confess'd her lord;
Yet one day lost, this deity below
Became the scorn and pity of his foe;
His blood a traitor's sacrifice was made,
And smok'd indignant on a ruffian's blade:
No trumpet's sound, no gasping army's yell,
Bid, with due horror, his great soul farewell:
Obscure his fall! all weltering in his gore,
His trunk was cast to perish on the shore!
While Julius frown'd the bloody monster dead,
Who brought the world in his great rival's head,
This sever'd head and trunk shall join once more,
Though realms now rise between, and oceans roar.
The trumpet's sound each vagrant mote shall hear,
Or fix'd in earth, or if afloat in air,
Obey the signal wafted in the wind,
And not one sleeping atom lay behind.

So swarming bees that, on a summer's day
In airy rings and wild meanders play,
Charm'd with the brazen sound, their wanderings end,
And, gently circling, on a bough descend.

The body thus renew'd, the conscious soul,
Which has perhaps been fluttering near the pole,
Or midst the burning planets wondering stray'd,
Or hover'd o'er where her pale corpse was laid,
Or rather coasted on her final state,
And fear'd, or wish'd, for her appointed fate;
This soul, returning with a constant flame,
Now weds for ever her immortal frame:
Life, which ran down before, so high is wound,
The springs maintain an everlasting round.

Thus a frail model of the work design'd
First takes a copy of the builder's mind;
Before the structure firm, with lasting oak,
And marble bowels of the solid rock,
Turns the strong arch, and bids the columns rise,
And bear the lofty palace to the skies;
The wrongs of time enabled to surpass,
With bars of adamant and ribs of brass.

That ancient, sacred, and illustrious dome,*
Where soon or late fair Albion's heroes come
From camps and courts, though great, or wise, or just,
To feed the worm, and moulder in the dust;
That solemn mansion of the royal dead,
Where passing slaves o'er sleeping monarchs tread,
Now populous o'erflows; a numerous race
Of rising kings fill all th' extended space;
A life well spent, not the victorious sword,
Awards the crown, and stiles the greater lord.

Nor monuments alone, and burial earth,
Labours with man to this his second birth;
But where gay palaces in pomp arise,
And gilded theatres invade the skies,
Nations shall wake, whose unrespected bones
Support the pride of their luxurious sons.
The most magnificent and costly dome
Is but an upper chamber to a tomb.
No spot on earth but has supplied a grave,
And human skulls the spacious ocean pave:
All's full of man; and at this dreadful turn
The swarm shall issue, and the hive shall burn.

Not all at once, nor in like manner, rise:
Some lift with pain their slow unwilling eyes,
Shrink backward from the terror of the light,
And bless the grave, and call for lasting night;
Others, whose long-attempted virtue stood
Fix'd as a rock, and broke the rushing flood,
Whose firm resolve nor beauty could melt down,
Nor raging tyrants from their posture frown;
Such, in this day of horrors, shall be seen
To face the thunders with a godlike mien.
The planets drop, their thoughts are fix'd above;
The centre shakes, their hearts disdain to move.
An earth dissolving, and a Heav'n thrown wide,
A yawning gulf, and fiends on every side,
Serene they view, impatient of delay,
And bless the dawn of everlasting day.

* Westminster Abbey.

Here Greatness prostrate falls;
gives place,

Here lazars smile; there Beauty bides
Christians, and Jews, and Turks, and
A blended throng, one undistinguishing.
Some who, perhaps, by mutual woes
With zeal for their distinct persuasions
In mutual friendship their long strife
And hand in hand their Saviour's cause.

But none are flush'd with brightness so
With juster confidence, enjoy the sun,
Than those whose pious bounties,
Have made them public fathers of men.
In that illustrious rank what shining!—
With such distinguish'd glory, fills
Bend down, my grateful muse! the sun
Which to such worthies thou art pleased
Wickham! Fox! Chicheley!* hail, ill-fated!
Who to far distant times dispense
Beneath your shades, and near you stand,
I first presum'd to touch the tremulous
All hail, thrice honour'd! 'twas you
To bless a people, and oblige a crew
And now you rise, eternally to shine,
Eternally to drink the rays divine.

Indulgent God! O how shall mortal man
His soul to due returns of gratitude,
For bounty so profuse to human kind?
Thy wondrous gift of an eternal life,
Shall I, who, some few years ago,
Than worm, or mite, or shadow cast,
Was nothing; shall I live, when even
Of every star shall languish and expire?
When earth's no more, shall I survive?
And through the radiant files of ages,
Or, as before the throne of God I stand,
See new worlds rolling from his hands?

* Founders of New College, Corpus Christi, and of all which the author was

Where our adventures shall perhaps be taught,
As we now tell how Michael sung or fought?
All that has being in full concert join,
And celebrate the depths of love divine!

But oh! before this blissful state, before
Th' aspiring soul this wondrous height can soar,
The Judge, descending, thunders from afar,
And all mankind is summon'd to the bar.

This mighty scene I next presume to draw;
Attend, great Anna! with religious awe:
Expect not here the known successful arts
To win attention, and command our hearts.
Fiction! be far away; let no machine,
Descending here, no fabled god, be seen;
Behold the God of gods indeed descend,
And worlds unnumber'd his approach attend!

Lo! the wide theatre, whose ample space
Must entertain the whole of human race,
At Heaven's all-powerful edict is prepar'd,
And fence'd around with an immortal guard.
Tribes, provinces, Dominions, worlds o'erflow
The mighty plain, and deluge all below,
And every age and nation pours along:
Nimrod and Bourbon mingle in the throng;
Adam salutes his youngest son: no sign
Of all those ages which their births disjoin.

How empty learning, and how vain is art,
But as it mends the life and guides the heart!
What volumes have been swell'd, what time been spent,
To fix a hero's birth-day or descent!
What joy must it now yield, what rapture raise,
To see the glorious race of ancient days!
To greet those worthies who perhaps have stood
Illustrious on record before the flood!
Alas! a nearer care your soul demands,
Cæsar unnoticed in your presence stands.

How vast the concourse! not in number more
The waves that break on the resounding shore,
The leaves that tremble in the shady grove,
The lamps that gild the spangled vaults above;

Those overwhelming armies, whose command
Said to one empire *fall*; another, *stand*;
Whose rear lay wrapt in night, while breaking dawn
Rous'd the broad front, and call'd the battle on;
Great Xerxes' world in arms, proud Cannæ's field
Where Carthage taught victorious Rome to yield,
(Another blow had broke the Fates' decree,
And earth had wanted her fourth monarchy)
Immortal Blenheim, fam'd Ramillia's host;
They all are here, and here they all are lost;
Their millions swell to be discern'd in vain,
Lost as a billow in th' unbounded main.

This echoing voice now rends the yielding air:
'For judgment, judgment, sons of men! prepare!'
Earth shakes anew, I hear her groans profound,
And Hell through all her trembling realms resound.

Whoe'er thou art, thou greatest pow'r of earth,
Blest with most equal planets at thy birth,
Whose valour drew the most successful sword,
Most realms united in one common lord,
Who on the day of triumph, saidst, 'Be thine
The skies, Jehovah, all this world is mine.'
Dare not to lift thine eye.—Alas! my muse!
How art thou lost? what numbers caust thou choose!

A sudden blush inflames the waving sky,
And now the crimson curtains open fly;
Lo! far within, and far above all height, [light]
Where Heaven's great Sovereign reigns in worlds o'
Whence Nature he informs, and with one ray,
Shot from his eye, does all her works survey,
Creates, supports, confounds! where time, and place,
Matter, and form, and fortune, life, and grace,
Wait humbly at the footstool of their God,
And move obedient at his awful nod;
Whence he beholds us vagrant emus crawl
At random on this air-suspended ball,
(Speck of creation) if he pour one breath,
The bubble breaks, and 'tis eternal death.

Thence issuing I behold, (but mortal sight
Sustains not such a rushing sea of light)

I see, on an empyreal flying throne
Sublimely rais'd, Heav'n's everlasting Son,
Crown'd with that majesty which form'd the world,
And the grand rebel flaming downward hurl'd,
Virtue, Dominion, Praise, Omnipotence,
Support the train of their triumphant Prince,
A zone, beyond the thought of angels bright,
Around him, like the zodiac, winds its light.
Night shades the solemn arches of his brows,
And in his cheek the purple morning glows,
Where'er, serene, he turns propitious eyes,
Or we expect, or find, a paradise;
But if resentment reddens their mild beams,
The Eden kindles, and the world's in flames.
On one hand Knowledge shines in purest light;
On one the sword of Justice, fiercely bright.
Now bend the knee in sport, present the reed:
Now tell the scourg'd Impostor he shall bleed!

Thus glorious thro' the courts of Heav'n the Source
Of life and death eternal bends his course;
Loud thunders round him roll, and lightnings play;
Th' angelic host is rang'd in bright array:
Some touch the string, some strike the sounding shell,
And mingling voices in rich concert swell;
Voices seraphic: bless'd with such a strain,
Could Satan hear, he were a god again.

Triumphant King of glory! Soul of Bliss!
What a stupendous turn of fate is this!
O! whither art thou rais'd above the scorn
And indigence of him in Bethlehem born;
A needless, helpless, unaccounted guest,
And but a second to the fodder'd beast?
How chang'd from him who, meekly prostrate laid,
Vouchsaf'd to wash the feet himself had made?
From him who was betray'd, forsook, deny'd,
Wept, languish'd, pray'd, bled, thirsted, groan'd,
and died?

Hung pierc'd and bare, insulted by the foe,
All Heaven in tears above, earth unconcern'd below?

And was't enough to bid the sun retire?
Why did not Nature at thy groan expire?
I see, I hear, I feel, the pangs divine;
The world is vanish'd,—I am wholly thine.

Mistaken Caiaphas! ah! which blasphem'd,
Thou or thy prisoner! which shall be condemn'd?
Well might'st thou rend thy garments, well exclaim,
Deep are the horrors of eternal flame!

But God is good! 'tis wondrous all! ev'n He

Thou gav'st to death, shame, torture, died for thee.

Now the descending triumph stops its flight,
From earth full twice a planetary height;
There all the clouds condens'd, two columns raise,
Distinct with orient veins and golden blaze;
One fix'd on earth, and one in sea, and round
Its ample foot the swelling billows sound:
These an immeasurable arch support,
The grand tribunal of this awful court:
Sheets of bright azure, from the purest sky,
Stream from the crystal arch, and round the co-
lumns fly:

Death, wrapt in chains, low at the basis lies,
And on the point of his own arrow dies.

Here high enthron'd th' eternal Judge is plac'd,
With all the grandeur of his godhead grac'd;
Stars on his robes in beauteous order meet,
And the sun burns beneath his awful feet.

Now an archangel eminently bright,
From off his silver staff, of wondrous height,
Unfurls the Christian flag, which waving flies,
And shuts and opens more than half the skies:
The Cross so strong a red, it sheds a stain
Where'er it floats, on earth, and air, and main;
Flushes the hill, and sets on fire the wood,
And turns the deep-dy'd ocean into blood.

Oh formidable glory! dreadful bright!
Refulgent torture to the guilty sight.
Ah turn, unwary muse! nor dare reveal
What horrid thoughts with the polluted dwell.

y not, (to make the sun shrink in his beam!)
are not affirm they wish it all a dream;
ish or their souls may with their limbs decay,
God be spoil'd of his eternal sway:
t rather, if thou know'st the means, unfold
w they with transport might the scene behold.
Ah how! but by repentance, by a mind
ick, and severe, its own offence to find?
' tears, and groans, and never-ceasing care,
nd all the pious violence of pray'r?
us then, with fervency, till now unknown,
cast my heart before th' eternal throne,
this great temple, which the skies surround
r homage to its Lord, a narrow bound.
O Thou! whose balance doth the mountains
weigh,
hose will the wild tumultuous seas obey,
hose breath can turn those wat'ry worlds to flame,
at flame to tempest, and that tempest tame;
rth's meanest son, all trembling, prostrate falls,
d on the boundless of thy goodness calls.
Oh! give the winds all past offence to sweep,
scatter wide, or bury in the deep:
y pow'r, my weakness, may I ever see,
nd wholly dedicate my soul to thee:
sign o'er my will; my passions ebb and flow
thy command, nor human motive know!
anger boil, let anger be my praise,
nd sin the graceful indignation raise:
y love be warm to succour the distress'd,
nd lift the burden from the soul oppress'd.
O may my understanding ever read
is glorious volume which thy wisdom made!
io decks the maiden Spring with flowery pride?
io calls forth Summer, like a sparkling bride?
io joys the mother Autumn's bed to crown?
nd bids old Winter lay her honours down?
t the great Ottoman, or greater Czar,
t Europe's arbitress of peace and war.

May sea, and land, and earth, and heav'n, be join'd,
To bring th' eternal Author to my mind!
When oceans roar, and awful thunders roll,
May thoughts of thy dread vengeance shake my soul;
When earth's in bloom, or planets proudly shine,
Adore, my heart! the majesty Divine.

' Through every scene of life, or peace, or war,
Plenty, or want, thy glory be my care!
Shine we in arms? or sing beneath our vine?
Thine is the vintage, and the conquest thine;
Thy pleasure points the shaft, and bends the bow,
The cluster blasts, or bids it brightly glow:
'Tis thou that lead'st our powerful armies forth,
And giv'st great Anne thy sceptre o'er the north.

' Grant I may ever, at the morning ray,
Open with pray'r the consecrated day;
Tune thy great praise, and bid my soul arise,
And with the mounting sun ascend the skies:
As that advances, let my zeal improve,
And glow with ardour of consummate love;
Nor cease at eve, but with the setting sun
My endless worship shall be still begun.
And, oh! permit the gloom of solemn Night
To sacred thought may forcibly invite.
When this world's shut, and awful planets rise,
Call on our minds, and raise them to the skies;
Compose our souls with a less dazzling sight,
And show all nature in a milder light;
How every boistrous thought in calms subsides!
How the smooth'd spirit into goodness glides!
O how divine! to tread the milky way,
To the bright palace of the Lord of day;
His court admire, or for his favour sue,
Or leagues of friendship with his saints renew;
Pleas'd to look down, and see the world asleep,
While I long vigils to its founder keep!

' Canst thou not shake the centre? Oh, control,
Subdue by force, the rebel in my soul.

Book II. THE LAST DAY.

277

Thou who canst still the raging of the flood,
Restrain the various tumults of my blood:
Teach me, with equal firmness, to sustain
Alluring pleasure, and assaulting pain.
O may I pant for thee in each desire!
And with strong faith foment the holy fire!
Stretch out my soul in hope, and grasp the prize
Which in Eternity's deep bosom lies!
At the great day of recompense behold,
Devoid of fear, the fatal book unfold!
Then wafted upward to the blissful seat,
From age to age my grateful song repeat;
My light, my life, my God, my Saviour, see,
And rival angels in the praise of thee!"

THE
LAST D
BOOK III

THE book unfolding, the resp
Of saints and angels, the tr
Of guilty souls, the gloomy rea
And all the horrors of the worl
I next presume to sing. What
Demands my last, but most exa
And let the muse or now affect
Or in inglorious shades for ever
She kindles; she's inflam'd, so n
She mounts; she gains upon the
The world grows less as she pu
And the sun darkens to her dis
Heav'n opening, all its sacred po
And overwhelms her with a rus
The triumph rings! archangels s
And echoing Nature lengthens e

Ten thousand trumpets now a
Now deepest silence lulls the vi
So deep the silence, and so stro
As Nature died, when she had
Nor man nor angel moves; the
Looks round, and with his glory
Then on the fatal book his hand
Which high to view supporting
In solemn form the rituals are p
The seal is broken, and a groan
And thou, my soul! (oh, fall to
And let the thought sink deep!)

See on the left (for by the gre
The throng divided falls on eith
How weak, how pale, how hagg
What more than death in every

With what distress, and glarings of affright,
They shock the heart, and turn away the sight?
In gloomy orbs their trembling eyeballs roll,
And tell the horrid secrets of the soul:
Each gesture mourns, each look is black with care.
And every groan is loaden with despair.
Reader! if guilty, spare the muse, and find
A truer image pictur'd in the mind.

Shouldst thou behold thy brother, father, wife,
And all the soft companions of thy life,
Whose blended interests levell'd at one aim,
Whose mix'd desires sent up one common flame,
Divided far, thy wretched self alone
Cast on the left of all whom thou hast known,
How would it wound? what millions wouldst thou give
For one more trial, one day more to live?
Flung back in time an hour, a moment's space,
To grasp with eagerness the means of grace,
Contend for mercy with a pious rage,
And in that moment to redeem an age?
Drive back the tide, suspend a storm in air,
Arrest the sun, but still of this despair.

Mark, on the right, how amiable a grace!
Their Maker's image fresh in every face!
What purple bloom my ravish'd soul admires,
And their eyes sparkling with immortal fires!
Triumphant Beauty! charms that rise above
This world, and in bless'd angels kindle love!
To the great Judge with holy pride they turn,
And dare behold th' Almighty's anger burn,
Its flash sustain, against its terror rise,
And on the dread tribunal fix their eyes.
Are these the forms that moulder'd in the dust?
Oh the transcendent glory of the just!
Yet still some thin remains of fear and doubt
Th' infected brightness of their joy pollute.

Thus the chaste bridegroom, when the priest draws
Beholds his blessing with a trembling eye, [nigh,
Feels doubtful passions throb in every vein,
And in his cheeks are mingled joy and pain,

Lest still some intervening chance should rise,
Leap forth at once, and snatch the golden prize,
Inflame his woe by bringing it so late,
And stab him in the crisis of his fate.

Since Adam's family, from first to last,
Now into one distinct survey is cast,
Look round, vain-glorious Muse! and you whoe'er
Devote yourselves to Fame, and think her fair,
Look round, and seek the lights of human race,
Whose shining acts Time's brightest annals grace;
Who founded sects, crowns conquer'd or resign'd;
Gave names to nations, or fam'd empires join'd;
Who rais'd the vale, and laid the mountain low;
And taught obedient rivers where to flow;
Who with vast fleets, as with a mighty chain,
Could bind the madness of the roaring main;
All lost? all undistinguish'd? no where found?
How will this truth in Bourbon's palace sound?
That hour, on which th' Almighty King on high,
From all eternity has fix'd his eye,
Whether his right hand favour'd or annoy'd,
Continu'd, alter'd, threaten'd, or destroy'd,
Southern or eastern sceptre downward hurl'd,
Gave north or west dominion o'er the world;
The point of time, for which the world was built,
For which the blood of God himself was spilt,
That dreadful moment is arriv'd.—

Aloft, the seats of bliss their pomp display,
Brighter than brightness this distinguish'd day;
Less glorious when of old th' eternal Son
From realms of night return'd with trophies won;
Thro' Heav'n's high gates when he triumphant rode,
And shouting angels hail'd the Victor God.
Horrors beneath, darkness in darkness, hell
Of hell, where torments behind torments dwell;
A furnace formidable, deep and wide,
O'erboiling with a mad sulphureous tide,
Expands its jaws, most dreadful to survey,
And roars outrageous for the destin'd prey:

The sons of light scarce unappall'd look down,
And nearer press Heav'n's everlasting throne.

Such is the scene, and one short moment's space
Concludes the hopes and fears of human race,
Proceed who dares!—I tremble as I write;
The whole creation swims before my sight;
I see, I see the Judge's frowning brow;
Say not 'tis distant; I behold it now:
I faint, my tardy blood forgets to flow,
My soul recoils at the stupendous woe;
That woe, those pangs, which from the guilty breast
In these, or words like these, shall be express'd:—

' Who burst the barriers of my peaceful grave?
Ah! cruel Death, that would no longer save,
But grudg'd me e'en that narrow dark abode,
And cast me out into the wrath of God;
Where shrieks, the roaring flame, the rattling chain,
And all the dreadful eloquence of pain,
Our only song; black fire's malignant light,
The sole refreshment of the blasted sight.

' Must all those pow'rs Heav'n gave me to supply
My soul with pleasure, and bring in my joy,
Rise up in arms against me, join the foe,
Sense, reason, memory, increase my woe?
And shall my voice, ordain'd on hymns to dwell,
Corrupt to groans, and blow the fires of hell?
Oh! must I look with terror on my gain,
And with existence only measure pain?
What! no reprieve, no least indulgence giv'n,
No beam of hope, from any point of Heav'n!
Ah Mercy! Mercy! art thou dead above?
Is love extinguish'd in the source of love?

' Bold that I am, did Heav'n stoop down to hell?
Th' expiring Lord of life my ransom seal?
Have I not been industrious to provoke?
From his embraces obstinately broke?
Pursued and panted for his mortal hate,
Earn'd my destruction, labour'd out my fate?
And dare I on extinguish'd love exclaim!
Take, take full vengeance, rouse the slackening flame;

Just is my lot—but, oh! must it transcend
The reach of time, despair a distant end?
With dreadful growth shoot forward, and arise
Where thought can't follow, and bold Fancy diest?

'Never! where falls the soul at that dread sound?
Down an abyss how dark, and how profound!
Down, down, (I still am falling, horrid pain!)
Ten thousand thousand fathoms still remain;
My plunge but still begun—and this for sin?
Could I offend if I had never been,
But still increas'd the senseless happy mass,
Flow'd in the stream, or shiver'd in the grass?

'Father of mercies! why from silent earth
Did'st thou awake, and curse me into birth?
Tear me from quiet, ravish me from night,
And make a thankless present of thy light?
Push into being a reverse of thee,
And animate a clod with misery?

'The beasts are happy; they come forth, and keep
Short watch on earth, and then lie down to sleep:
Pain is for man; and, oh! how yest a pain
For crimes, which made the Godhead bleed in vain?
Annul'd his groans, as far as in them lay,
And flung his agonies and death away?
As our dire punishment for ever strong,
Our constitution, too, for ever young,
Curs'd with returns of vigour, still the same,
Powerful to bear, and satisfy the flame;
Still to be caught, and still to be pursu'd!
To perish still, and still to be renew'd!

'And this, my help! my God! at thy decree?
Nature is chang'd, and hell should succour me.
And canst thou then look down from perfect bliss,
And see me plunging in the dark abyss?
Calling thee Father, in a sea of fire?
Or pouring blasphemies at thy desire?
With mortals' anguish wilt thou raise thy name,
And by my pangs Omnipotence proclaim?

'Thou who canst toss the planets to and fro,
Contract not thy great vengeance to my woe;

Crush worlds; in hotter flames fall'n angels lay;
On me almighty wrath is cast away.
Call back thy thunders, Lord! hold in thy rage,
Nor with a speck of wretchedness engage:
Forget me quite, nor stoop a worm to blame,
But lose me in the greatness of thy name.
Thou art all love, all mercy, all divine,
And shall I make those glories cease to shine?
Shall sinful man grow great by his offence,
And from its course turn back Omnipotence?

'Forbid it! and, oh! grant, great God! at least
This one, this slender, almost *no* request;
When I have wept a thousand lives away,
When Torment is grown weary of its prey,
When I have rav'd ten thousand years in fire,
Ten thousand thousands, let me then expire.'

Deep anguish! but too late; the hopeless soul
Bound to the bottom of the burning pool,
Though loth, and ever loud blaspheming, owns
He's justly doom'd to pour eternal groans;
Inclos'd with horrors, and transfix'd with pain,
Rolling in vengeance, struggling with his chain;
To talk to fiery tempests, to implore
The raging flame to give its burnings o'er;
To toss, to writhe, to pant beneath his load,
And bear the weight of an offended God.

The favour'd of their Judge in triumph move
To take possession of their thrones above,
Satan's accrû'd desertion to supply,
And fill the vacant stations of the sky;
Again to kindle long-extinguish'd rays,
And with new lights dilate the heavenly blaze;
To crop the roses of immortal youth,
And drink the fountain-head of sacred truth;
To swim in seas of bliss, to strike the string,
And lift the voice to their Almighty King;
To lose eternity in grateful lays,
And fill Heav'n's wide circumference with praise.

But I attempt the wondrous height in vain,
And leave unfinish'd the too lofty strain:

Gaze on those hidden treasures thou shalt find,
Wander through all the glories of thy mind.
Of perfect knowledge, see, the dawning light
Foretels a noon most exquisitely bright!
Here springs of endless joy are breaking forth!
There buds the promise of celestial worth!
Worth which must ripen in a happier clime,
And brighter sun, beyond the bounds of time.
Thou, minor, canst not guess thy vast estate,
What stores on foreign coasts, thy landing wait;
Lose not thy claim, let virtue's paths be trod,
Thus glad all Heav'n, and please that bounteous God,
Who, to light thee to pleasures, hung on high
Yon radiant orb, proud regent of the sky:
That service done, its beams shall fade away,
And God shine forth in one eternal day.

A
PARAPHRASE
ON PART OF THE
BOOK OF JOB.*

THRICE happy Job † long liv'd in regal state,
Nor saw the sumptuous East a prince so great;
Whose worldly stores in such abundance flow'd,
Whose heart with such exalted virtue glow'd.
At length misfortunes take their turn to reign,
And ills on ills succeed, a dreadful train!
What now but deaths, and poverty, and wrong,
The sword wide-wasting, the reproachful tongue,

* It is disputed, among the critics, who was the author of the book of Job: some give it to Moses, some to others. As I was engaged in this little performance, some arguments occurred to me which favour the former of these opinions; which arguments I have flung into the following Notes, where little else is to be expected.

† The Almighty's speech, chap. xxxviii. &c. which is what I paraphrase in this little work, is by much the finest part of the noblest and most ancient poem in the world. Bishop Patrick says its grandeur is as much above all other poetry, as thunder is louder than a whisper. In order to set this distinguished part of the poem in a fuller light, and give the reader a clearer conception of it, I have abridged the preceding and subsequent parts of the poem, and joined them to it; so that this piece is a sort of an epitome of the whole book of Job.

I use the word *paraphrase*, because I want another which might better answer to the uncommon liberties I have taken. I have omitted, added, and transposed. The mountain, the comet, the sun, and other parts, are entirely added: those upon the peacock, the lion, &c. are much enlarged: and I have thrown the whole into a method more suitable to our notions of regularity. The judicious, if they compare this piece with the original, will, I flatter myself, find the reasons for the great liberties I have indulged myself in through the whole.

Longinus has a chapter on Interrogations, which shows that they contribute much to the sublime. This speech of the Almighty is made up of them. Interrogation seems, indeed, the proper style of majesty incensed. It differs from other manner of reproof, as bidding a person execute himself does from a common execution; for he that asks the guilty a proper question, makes him, in effect, pass sentence on himself.

And spotted plagues, that mark'd
So thick with pains, they wanted
A change so sad what mortal he
Exhausted woe had left him now
But gave him all to grief. Low
Wept in the dust, and sorely sm
His friends around the deep affl
Felt all his pangs, and groan for
In anguish of their hearts their
And seven long days in solemn
A debt of reverence to distress
Then Job contain'd no more, bu
His day of birth, its inauspicio
He wishes sunk in shades of en
And blotted from the year; nor
Death, instant death, impatient
That seat of peace, that mansio
Where rest and mortals are no l
Where counsellors are hush'd, a
(O happy turn!) no more are wi

His words were daring, and dis
His conduct they reprove, and i
And now they kindled into war
And sentiments oppos'd with eq
Fix'd in opinion, both refuse to
And summon all their reason to
So high, at length, their argume
They reach'd the last exten of
A pause ensued:—when, lo! He
And awfully the long contention
Full o'er their heads, with terri
A sudden whirlwind blacken'd :
(They saw and trembled!) From
A dreadful voice, and thus th'

* The book of Job is well known like the tragedies of Old Greece, is probably the most noble part of it, but out of the whirlwind (so suitable to the Greek stage, when there happened to be fictitious; but it is a fiction more in which Job lived than to any since.

PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB. 289

* Who gives his tongue a loose so bold and vain,
Censures my conduct, and reproves my reign;
Lifts up his thought against me from the dust,
And tells the world's Creator what is just?
Of late so brave, now lift a dauntless eye,
Face my demand, and give it a reply.
Where didst thou dwell at Nature's early birth?
Who laid foundations for the spacious earth?
Who on its surface did extend the line,
Its form determine, and its bulk confine?
Who fix'd the corner-stone? what hand declare,
Hung it on nought, and fasten'd it in air,
When the bright morning stars in concert sung,
When Heaven's high arch with loud hosannas rung,
When shouting sons of God the triumph crown'd,
And the wide concave thunder'd with the sound?
Earth's numerous kingdoms, hast thou view'd them all?
And can thy span of knowledge grasp the ball?
Who heav'd the mountain which sublimely stands,
And casts its shadow into distant lands?

* Who, stretching forth his sceptre o'er the deep,
Can that wild world in due subjection keep?
I broke the globe, I scoop'd its hollow side,
And did a basin for the floods provide:
I chain'd them with my word; the boiling sea,
Work'd up in tempests, hears my great decree:
" Thus far thy floating tide shall be convey'd;
And here, O main! be thy proud billows stay'd."*

law were the appearances of the Almighty after this manner, Exod. ch. xix. Ezecl. ch. i. &c. Hence is he said to "dwell in thick darkness: and have his way in the whirlwind."

* There is a very great air in all that precedes, but this is signally sublime. We are struck with admiration to see the vast and ungovernable ocean receiving commands, and punctually obeying them; to find it like a managed horse, raging, tossing, and foaming, but by the rule and direction of its master. This passage yields in sublimity to that of "Let there be light," &c. so much only as the absolute government of nature yields to the creation of it.

The like spirit in these two passages is no bad concurrent argument that Moses is author of the book of Job.

* Hast thou explor'd the secrets of the deep,
Where, shut from use, unnumber'd treasures sleep,
Where, down a thousand fathoms from the day,
Springs the great fountain, mother of the sea?
Those gloomy paths did thy bold foot e'er tread,
Whole worlds of waters rolling o'er thy head?

* Hath the cleft centre open'd wide to thee?
Death's inmost chambers didst thou ever see?
E'er knock at his tremendous gate, and wade
To the black portal through th' incumbent shade?
Deep are those shades; but shades still deeper hide
My counsels from the ken of human pride.

* Where dwells the light? in what resplendent dome?
And where has darkness made her dismal home?
Thou know'st, no doubt, since thy large heart is fraught
With ripen'd wisdom through long ages brought,
Since Nature was call'd forth when thou wast by,
And into being rose beneath thine eye!

* Are mists begotten? who their father knew?
From whom descend the pearly drops of dew?
To bind the stream by night what hand can boast?
Or whiten morning with the hoary frost?
Whose powerful breath, from northern regions blown,
Touches the sea, and turns it into stone?
A sudden desert spreads o'er realms defac'd,
And lays one half of the creation waste?

* Thou know'st me not; thy blindness cannot see
How vast a distance parts thy God from thee.
Canst thou in whirlwinds mount aloft? canst thou
In clouds and darkness wrap thy awful brow?
And, when day triumphs in meridian light,
Put forth thy hand, and shade the world with night?

* Who launch'd the clouds in air, and bid them roll
Suspended seas aloft, from pole to pole?
Who can refresh the burning sandy plain,
And quench the summer with a waste of rain?
Who in rough deserts, far from human toil,
Made rocks bring forth, and desolation smile?
There blooms the rose, where human face ne'er shone,
And spreads its beauties to the sun alone.

PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB. 291

'To check the show'r who lifts his hand on high,
And shuts the sluices of th' exhausted sky,
When earth no longer mourns her gaping veins,
Her naked mountains and her russet plains,
But, new in life, a cheerful prospect yields
Of shining rivers, and of verdant fields;
When groves and forests lavish all their bloom,
And earth and heav'n are fill'd with rich perfume?

'Hast thou e'er scal'd my wintry skies, and seen
Of hail and snows my northern magazine?
These the dread treasures of mine anger are,
My funds of vengeance for the day of war,
When clouds rain death and storms, at my command,
Rage through the world, or waste a guilty land.

'Who taught the rapid winds to fly so fast,
Or shakes the centre with his eastern blast?
Who from the skies can a whole deluge pour?
Who strikes through Nature with the solemn roar
Of dreadful thunder, points it where to fall,
And in fierce lightning wraps the flying ball?—
Not he who trembles at the darted fires,
Falls at the sound, and in the flash expires.

'Who drew the comet out to such a size,
And pour'd his flaming train o'er half the skies?
Did thy resentment hang him out? Does he
Glare on the nations, and denounce, from thee?

'Who on low earth can moderate the rein
That guides the stars along th' ethereal plain?
Appoint their seasons, and direct their course,
Their lustre brighten, and supply their force?
Canst thou the skies' benevolence restrain,
And cause the Pleiades to shine in vain?
Or, when Orion sparkles from his sphere,
Thaw the cold season, and unbind the year?
Bid Mazzaroth his destin'd station know,
And teach the bright Arcturus where to glow?
Mine is the Night, with all her stars; I pour
Myriads, and myriads I reserve in store.

'Dost thou pronounce where Day-light shall be born,
And draw the purple curtain of the Morn?

Awake the Sun, and bid him come
And glad thy world with his obse
Hast thou, enthron'd in flaming gl
Triumphant round the spacious ri
That pomp of light, what hand so
That distant earth lies basking in

' Who did the Soul with her ric
And light up reason in the huma
To shine, with fresh increase of li
When stars and sun are set in e
To these my various questions mo
Th' Almighty spoke, and, speakin

What then, Chaldean Sire! was
Thus thou, with trembling heart, an
' Once and again, which I in groa
My tongue has err'd, but shall pr
My voice is in eternal silence bou
And all my soul falls prostrate to

He ceas'd : when, lo! again th' .
The same dread voice from the black

' Can that arm measure with an
And canst thou thunder with a vo
Or in the hollow of thy hand con
The bulk of waters, the wide-spre
When, mad with tempests, all the
In all their rage, and dash the dis

' Come forth, in Beauty's excell
And be the grandeur of thy pow'r
Put on omnipotence, and, frownin
The spacious round of the creatio
Despatch thy vengeance, bid it ov
Triumphant Vice, lay lofty tyrant
And crumble them to dust. Whe
I grant thy safety lodg'd in thee a
Of thee thou art, and may'st unda
Behind the buckler of thine own

' Fond Man! the vision of a mor
Dream of a dream ! and shadow of
What worlds hast thou produc'd
What insects cherish'd, that thy C

PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB. 293

When, pain'd with hunger, the wild raven's brood
Loud calls on God,* importunate for food;
Who hears their cry, who grants their hoarse request,
And stills the clamour of the craving nest?

* Who in the stupid ostrich † has subdu'd
A parent's care, and fond inquietude?
While far she flies, her scatter'd eggs are found,
Without an owner, on the sandy ground;
Cast out on fortune, they at mercy lie,
And borrow life from an indulgent sky;
Adopted by the sun, in blaze of day,
They ripen under his prolific ray;
Unmindful she that some unhappy tread
May crush her young in their neglected bed:
What time she skims along the field with speed,‡
She scorns the rider, and pursuing steed.||

* Another argument that Moses was the author is, that most of the creatures here mentioned are Egyptian. The reason given why the raven is particularly mentioned as an object of the care of Providence is, because by her clamorous and importunate voice she particularly seems always calling upon it. And since there were ravens on the banks of the Nile more clamorous than the rest of that species, those probably are meant in this place.

† There are many instances of this bird's stupidity; let two suffice. First, it covers its head in the reeds, and thinks itself all out of sight.

— Stat lamine clauso

Ridendum revoluta caput, creditque latere

Quæ non ipsa videt — Claud.

Secondly, They that go in pursuit of them, draw the skin of an ostrich's neck on one hand, which proves a sufficient lure to take them with the other.

They have so little brain, that Heliogabalus had six hundred heads for his supper.

Here we may observe that our judicious as well as sublime author just touches the great points of distinction in each creature, and then hastens to another. A description is exact when you cannot add, but what is common to another thing; nor withdraw, but something peculiarly belonging to the thing described. A likeness is lost in too much description, as a meaning often in too much illustration.

‡ Here is marked another peculiar quality of this creature, which neither flies nor runs directly, but has a motion composed of both, and, using its wings as sails, makes great speed.

Vasta velut Lybiae venantium vocibus ales

Cum premitur, calidas cursu transmittit arenas,

Inque modum veli sinuatis flamine pennis

Pulveruleuta volat — Claud. in Eatr.

¶ Xenophon says, Cyrus had horses that could overtake

' How rich the peacock!* what bright glories run
From plume to plume, and vary in the sun!
He proudly spreads them to the golden ray,
Gives all his colours, and adorns the day;
With conscious state the spacious round displays,
And slowly moves amid the waving blaze.

' Who taught the hawk to find, in seasons wise,
Perpetual summer, and a change of skies?
When clouds deform the year, she mounts the wind,
Shoots to the south, nor fears the storm behind;
The sun returning, she returns again,
Lives in his beams, and leaves ill days to men.

' Though strong the hawk, tho' practis'd well to fly,†
An eagle drops her in a lower sky!
An eagle, when, deserting human sight,
She seeks the sun in her unwearied flight:
Did thy command her yellow pinion lift
So high in air, and seat her on the clift,
Where far above thy world she dwells alone,
And proudly makes the strength of rocks her own;
Thence wide o'er nature takes her dread survey,
And with a glance predestinates her prey!‡
She feasts her young with blood, and, hovering o'er
Th' unslaughter'd host, enjoys the promis'd gore.

the goat and the wild ass, but none that could reach this creature. A thousand golden ducats, or an hundred camels, was the stated price of a horse that could equal their speed.

* Though this bird is but just mentioned in my author, I could not forbear going a little farther, and spreading those beautiful plumes (which are there shut up) into half a dozen lines. The circumstance I have marked of his opening his plumes to the sun is true: *Expandit colores adverso maxime sole, quia sic fulgentius radiant.* Plin. l. x. c. 20.

† Thuanus (*De re Accip.*) mentions a hawk that flew from Paris to London in a night.

And the Egyptians in regard to its swiftness, made it their symbol for the wind; for which reason we may suppose the hawk, as well as the crow above, to have been a bird of note in Egypt.

‡ The eagle is said to be of so acute a sight, that when she is so high in air that man cannot see her, she can discern the smallest fish under water. My author accurately understood the nature of the creatures he describes, and seems to have been a naturalist as well as a poet, which the next note will confirm.

PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB. 295

'Know'st thou how many moons, by me assign'd,
Roll o'er the mountain goat, and forest hind,*
While, pregnant, they a mother's load sustain?
They bend in anguish, and cast forth their pain.
Hale are their young, from human frailties freed,
Walk unsustain'd, and unassisted feed;
They live at once, forsake the dam's warm side,
Take the wide world, with Nature for their guide;
Bound o'er the lawn, or seek the distant glade,
And find a home in each delightful shade.

'Will the tall reem, which knows no lord but me,
Low at the crib, and ask an alms of thee?
Submit his unworn shoulder to the yoke,
Break the stiff clod, and o'er thy furrow smoke?
Since great his strength, go trust him, void of care,
Lay on his neck the toil of all the year;
Bid him bring home the seasons to thy doors,
And cast his load among thy gather'd stores.

'Didst thou from service the wild ass discharge,
And break his bonds, and bid him live at large;
Through the wide waste, his ample mansion, roam,
And lose himself in his unbounded home?
By Nature's hand magnificently fed,
His meal is on the range of mountains spread;
As in pure air aloft he bounds along,
He sees in distant smoke the city throng;
Conscious of freedom, scorns the smother'd train,
The threatening driver, and the servile rein.

'Survey the warlike horse! didst thou invest
With thunder his robust distended chest?
No sense of fear his dauntless soul allays;
'Tis dreadful to behold his nostrils blaze:

* The meaning of this question is, Knowest thou the time and circumstances of their bringing forth? for to know the time only was easy and had nothing extraordinary in it; but the circumstances had something peculiarly expressive of God's providence, which makes the question proper in this place. Pliny observes, that the hind with young is by instinct directed to a certain herb called Seselis, which facilitates the birth. Thunder also (which looks like the more immediate hand of Providence) has the same effect, Ps. xxix. In so early an age to observe these things may style our author a Naturalist.

To paw the vale he proudly takes delight,
And triumphs in the fulness of his might:
High rais'd, he snuffs the battle from afar,
And burns to plunge amid the raging war;
And mocks at death, and throws his foam around,
And in a storm of fury shakes the ground.
How does his firm, his rising heart, advance
Full on the brandish'd sword and shaken lance,
While his fix'd eyeballs meet the dazzling shield,
Gaze, and return the lightning of the field!
He sinks the sense of pain in generous pride,
Nor feels the shaft that trembles in his side;
But neighs to the shrill trumpet's dreadful blast
Till death, and when he groans, he groans his last.

* But, fiercer still, the lordly lion stalks,
Grimly majestic in his lonely walks;
When round he glares, all living creatures fly;
He clears the desert with his rolling eye.
Say, mortal! does he rouse at thy command,
And roar to thee, and live upon thy hand?
Dost thou for him in forests bend thy bow,
And to his gloomy den the morsel throw,
Where bent on death lie hid his tawny brood,
And, couch'd in dreadful ambush, pant for blood;
Or, stretch'd on broken limbs, consume the day,
In darkness wrapt, and slumber o'er their prey?
By the pale moon they take their destin'd round,*
And lash their sides, and furious tear the ground.
Now shrieks and dying groans the desert ill;
They range, they rend; their ravenous jaws distil
With crimson foam; and when the banquet's o'er,
They stride away, and paint their steps with gore:
In flight alone the shepherd puts his trust,
And shudders at the talon in the dust.

* Mild is my behemoth, though large his frame;
Smooth in his temper, and repress'd his flame,

* Pursuing their prey by night is true of most wild beasts, particularly the lion, Psal. civ. 20. The Arabians have one among their five hundred names for the lion, which signifies *the hunter by moon-shine*.

PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB. 297

While unprovok'd. This native of the flood
Lifts his broad foot, and puts ashore for food;
Earth sinks beneath him as he moves along
To seek the herbs, and mingle with the throng.
See, with what strength his harden'd loins are bound,
All over proof, and shut against a wound!
How like a mountain-cedar moves his tail!
Nor can his complicated sinews fail.
Built high and wide, his solid bones surpass
The bars of steel; his ribs are ribs of brass;
His port majestic, and his armed jaw,
Give the wide forest and the mountain law.
The mountains feed him; there the beasts admire
The mighty stranger, and in dread retire;
At length his greatness nearer they survey,
Graze in his shadow, and his eye obey.
The fens and marshes are his cool retreat,
His noontide shelter from the burning heat;
Their sedgy bosoms his wide couch are made,
And groves of willows give him all their shade.
His eye drinks Jordan up, when, fir'd with drought,
He trusts to turn its current down his throat;
In lessen'd waves it creeps along the plain;
He sinks a river,* and he thirsts again.

* Go to the Nile, and, from its fruitful side,
Cast forth thy line into the swelling tide;
With slender hair leviathan † command,
And stretch his vastness on the loaded strand.
Will he become thy servant? will he own
Thy lordly nod, and tremble at thy frown?

* Cephesi glaciale caput quo suetus anhelam
Ferre sitim Python, amnemque ayertere ponto.
Stat. Theb. v. 349.

Qui spiris tegeret montes, hauriret hiatu
Flumina, &c. *Claud. Pref. in Ruf.*

Let not then, this hyperbole seem too much for an Eastern poet, though some commentators of name strain hard, in this place, for a new construction, through fear of it.

† The taking the crocodile is most difficult. Diodorus says, they are not to be taken but by iron nets. When ~~Augustus~~ conquered Egypt, he struck a medal, the obverse of which was a crocodile chained to a palm-tree, with this inscription, *Nemo antea religavit.*

Or with his sport amuse thy leisure day,
And, bound in silk, with thy soft maiden's play?
Shall pompous banquets swell with such a prize?
And the bowl journey round his ample size?
Or the debating merchants share the prey,
And various limbs to various marts convey?
Through his firm skull what steel its way can win?
What forceful engine can subdue his skin?
Fly far, and live; tempt not his matchless might;
The bravest shrink to cowards in his sight;
The rashest dare not rouse him up: * who then
Shall turn on me, among the sons of men?

* Am I a debtor? hast thou ever heard
Whence come the gifts which are on me conferr'd?
My lavish fruit a thousand vallies fills,
And mine the herds that graze a thousand hills:
Earth, sea, and air, all Nature is my own,
And stars and sun are dust beneath my throne;
And dar'st thou with the world's great Father vie,
Thou, who dost tremble at my creature's eye?

* At full my huge leviathan shall rise,
Boast all his strength, and spread his wondrous size:
Who, great in arms, e'er stripp'd his shining mail,
Or crown'd his triumph with a single scale?
Whose heart sustains him to draw near? Behold
Destruction yawns; † his spacious jaws unfold,
And, marshall'd round the wide expanse, disclose
Teeth edg'd with death, and crowding rows on rows:
What hideous fangs on either side arise!
And what a deep abyss between them lies!
Mete with thy lance, and with thy plummet sound,
The one how long, the other how profound!
His bulk is charg'd with such a furious soul,
That clouds of smoke from his spread nostrils roll

* This alludes to a custom of this creature, which is, when sated with fish to come ashore and sleep among the reeds.

† The crocodile's mouth is exceeding wide. When he gapes, says Pliny, *sit totum us.* Martial says to his old woman,

Cum comparata rictibus tuis ora

Nil docet dentes esse dentes magnos.

So that the expression there is barely just,

PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB.

299

As from a furnace; and, when rous'd his ire,
Fate issues from his jaws in streams of fire.*
The rage of tempests, and the roar of seas,
Thy terror, this thy great superior please;
Strength on his ample shoulder sits in state;
His well-join'd limbs are dreadfully complete;
His flakes of solid flesh are slow to part;
As steel his nerves, as adamant his heart,
When, late-awak'd, he rears him from the floods,
And, stretching forth his stature to the clouds,
Writhes in the sun aloft his scaly height,
And strikes the distant hills with transient light,
Far round are fatal damps of terror spread,
The mighty fear, nor blush to own their dread.
Large is his front; and when his burnish'd eyes
Lift their broad lids, the morning seems to rise,†

* This, too, is nearer truth than at first view may be imagined. The crocodile, say the naturalists, lying long under water, and being there forced to hold its breath, when it emerges, the breath long repressed is hot, and bursts out so violently, that it resembles fire and smoke. The horse suppresses not his breath by any means so long, neither is he so fierce and animated: yet the most correct of poets ventures to use the same metaphor concerning him.

Collectumque premens volvit sub naribus ignem.
By this and the foregoing note, I would caution against a false opinion of the Eastern boldness, from passages in them ill understood.

† His eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. I think this gives us as great an image of the thing it would express as can enter the thought of man. It is not improbable that the Egyptians stole their hieroglyphic for the morning, which is the crocodile's eye, from this passage, though no commentator, I have seen, mentions it. It is easy to conceive how the Egyptians should be both readers and admirers of the writings of Moses, whom I suppose the author of this poem.

I have observed already that three or four of the creatures here described are Egyptian; the two last are notoriously so; they are the river-horse and the crocodile, those celebrated inhabitants of the Nile; and on these two it is that our author chiefly dwells. It would have been expected from an author more remote from that river than Moses, in a catalogue of creatures produced to magnify their Creator, to have dwelt on the two largest works of his hand, viz. the elephant and the whale. This is so natural an expectation, that some commentators have rendered behemoth and leviathan, the elephant and whale, though the descriptions in our author will not admit of it; but Moses being, as we may well suppose, under an immediate terror

In vain may death in various shapes invade,
The swift-wing'd arrow, the descending blade;
His naked breast their impotence defies;
The dart rebounds, the brittle fauchion flies.
Shut in himself, the war without he hears,
Safe in the tempest of their rattling spears;
The cumber'd strand their wasted pollies strow;
His sport the rage and labour of the foe.
His pastimes like a caldron boil the flood,
And blacken ocean with the rising mud;
The billows feel him as he works his way,
His hoary footsteps shine along the sea;
The foam high-wrought with white divides the green,
And distant sailors point where death has been.
His like earth bears not on her spacious face;
Alone in nature stands his dauntless race,
For utter ignorance of fear renown'd:
In wrath he rolls his baleful eye around;
Makes every swoln disdainful heart subside,
And holds dominion o'er the sons of Pride.'

Then the Chaldean eas'd his labouring breast,
With full conviction of his crime oppress'd.

'Thou canst accomplish all things, Lord of might!
And every thought is naked to thy sight:
But, oh! thy ways are wonderful, and lie
Beyond the deepest reach of mortal eye.
Oft have I heard of thine Almighty pow'r,
But never saw thee till this dreadful hour.
O'erwhelm'd with shame, the Lord of life I see,
Abhor myself, and give my soul to thee:
Nor shall my weakness tempt thine anger more;
Man is not made to question, but adore.'

of the hippopotamus and crocodile, from their daily mischiefs and ravages around him, it is very accountable why he should permit them to take place.

THE END.

INDEX.

ADDRESS to Death, 6. to the great and indolent, 20. to the lilies, 36. to man, 248. to the aged, 51. in God, 52. 53, 208, 211, 250, 251. to Jesus Christ, 255. to infidels, 54, 152. to the day of judgment, 201. to night, 239. to the moon, ib. to the stars, and their supposed inhabitants, 216, 226. to the ocean, 64. to Lorenzo to awake, 257. juration, solemn, 249. lictions, beneficial, 206. and disease harbingers of death, 46. egory on sleep, 1. on aged rees, 51. on time, 17. on the end of life, 52. on learning, 76. amont, death of, 81. ibition and avarice, their influence, 104, 109. the true, 94. proof of immortality, 131. gels and men compared, 61. nihilation, absurdities of, 144. bad effects of, 71. rology, the true, 222. thor's prayer for himself, 254. I, the striking of, its import, 24. le, the rending of, 156, 179. ites, how superior to man, 130. e, earthly, its instability, 6. cristian, his dignity, 68. compared to a ship at sea, 87. ifference between him and worldly men, 188. rist's crucifixion, 53. his life, death, &c. proofs of immortality, 54. uds beautifully described, 210. plaint, a good man's, on the idea of no future existence, 138. incience, the treachery of, 20. power whence derived, 151. versation, the benefits of, 26. ation, its eadimmortality, 147. of judgment, 201. d, folly of lamenting them, crime of violating the, 38. th, danger of sudden and unexpected, 14. its great vantages, 61. its different rms, 91. antidote against a fear of, 87. view of, 199. th-bed of friends finely described, 82. of the just, 30. option, contempt of, recommended, 169. how to be rendered unnecessary, ib.

Deluge described, 193. Devil, his sentence, 203. Discontent of man proves him to be immortal, 123. Disease the harbinger of death, 46. Diversions censured, 15. Dreams apropos of immortality, 3. Earth, the, 37. compared with eternity, 114. Epitaph on the human race, supposing no future existence, 143. Eternity described, 113. Evening, a summer's, 32. Evils, natural, their benefits, 206. Experience the corrector of pride, 76. Faith dissipates the terrors of death, 66. Fame, its vanity, 51. description of, 131. Fear of a future state proves its reality, 155. Firmament described, 222. Florello, story of, 166. Folly contrasted with wisdom, 83. Fortune, its inutility to the wicked, 186. Free-thinking, the true defined, 152. Friends, their value, 26, 27. how miracles on earth, 28. fine description of their death, 82. Friendship, how preserved, 28. Funerals, pompous described, 249. Future state, a good man's complaint supposing none, 138. Glory, true, defined, 171. God sublimely described, 58. his decrees vindicated, 205. from what cause adored, 151. Grace described, 4. a hell if there be no future state, 143. Greatness, true, described, 171. Grief the school of wisdom, 77. Happiness, present, an earnest of future pain, 9. where only to be found on earth, 27. the true defined, 184. Health of mind described, 183. Heavens, starry, questions arising from a view of, 238. Hell described, 201. Hope, 125. a proof of immortality, 159. Hours, past, the wisdom of recalling to memory, 24. Illness, the bane of the soul, 18. Ills proceed from man, 207. their intent, 208.

puted, 90. various evils of, 7	Self-kno-
Loreuzzo, various addresses to, see different parts of Nights i. iii. vi. and viii.	gree o Shame, 131
Love and joy the essence of heaven, 144	Sister, Skies pr
Lysander and Aspasia, 96	212
Man, the good, characterised. 22. complicated nature of, 2. melancholy picture of, 248 cause of his misery, 96. his heart described, 125	Solitude compa-
Ministers of God described, 213	Sorrow kind,
Miracles, 227. use of, 228	Soul, 16 222. i by dre
Moon influences the tides, 226	Speech, Spirits d
Morality defined, 68	of me
Narcissa, character and death of, 25	Stars, 1 distan
Nature compared with man, 16	how k
Necessity, its doctrine disap- proved, 154	Starry h
Night beautifully described, 1. 210, 214, 238. its pre-emi- nence over day, 74, 214	Suicide, incent
Nobility, wealth, &c. vanity of, 51	Supersti-
Obligations rendered null by the plan of infidelity, 140	getry
Ocean described, 164	Tears, t
Pursuits, human, vanity of, 5	Thought
Passions, the grandeur of, 135. their origin, ib.	ance,
Pesce and pleasure, derivation of, 171	Time, 1
Philander, effects of his last sigh on the author, 10. his death, 31	end,
Philosophers, heathen, 221	eterni
Piety, its blessings, 178	Tombs,
Pleasure and pride, how re- conciled, 72	from,
Pleasure, its origin, 175	Truth d
Pleasures prohibited by con- science unnatural, 180	Undersi
Poetry and prose, their affinity 79	Virtue, deser
	Nights
	Waking
	Wealth,
	Wisdom
	World,
	of id e
	sent a



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